This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

WIDENER
HN NC97 5

Digitized by Google

97.5.230

Harvard College
Library

FROM THE FUND GIVEN
IN HONOR OF

CHESTER NOYES GREENOUGH
DEAN OF HARVARD COLLEGE

1921–1927

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

WITCH-FINDER.

VOL. II.

Digitized by Google

London:
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New-Street-Square.

Digitized by Google

THE

WITCH-FINDER;

OR,

THE WISDOM OF OUR ANCESTORS.

A Romance.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE LOLLARDS," "OTHER TIMES,"
"CALTHORPE," &c.

Ay me! said I within my wearied breast,
And sighed sad, wherefore did God erect
This stage of misery?

DR. H. MORE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, BROWN, AND GREEN,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1824.

Digitized by Google

21477.52.30

HARVARD COLLEGE
APR 12 1935
LIBRARY
Greenough fund

3611
49-143
H6-3

Digitized by Google

THE

WITCH-FINDER.

CHAPTER I.

Wisdom doth not more moderate wasting sorrow
Than time: later time for't; be mindful of thy safety.
WEBSTER.

At the date of the events set forth in this narrative, though the land was frequently disturbed by party divisions, they did not rage with all the fury which had once belonged to them. Those who were most disgusted with the conduct of the Regicides, after the total failure of the Royal cause, had in many instances left the country. But the exiles sighed in a foreign land for their home, and when

Digitized by Google

it was understood that by submission to the usurping government they might be safe in person and in property, if they returned to England; not a few, like the respectable and celebrated Evelyn, were glad to do so, as they saw no prospect of that change which they desired, and which they had for a time expected. Men who from their opposite attachments, could at one period not brook each other's society, began to mingle when the lapse of seven or eight years had abated their animosities, and afforded leisure for prudent calculation. The friends of the King were not always unwilling to connect themselves intimately with their former enemies, hoping by such connections to screen themselves from suspicion, and from the operation of any new measure of confiscation to which they might otherwise be exposed; while those once most distinguished by their

Digitized by Google

zeal for the commonwealth, when they found the change brought about by their means had not produced that blissful freedom and repose which they had declared, and in some instances, perhaps, expected would be the immediate reward of their exertions, were led to look on the friends of royalty with more urbanity than before.

Lesley was one of those who by family connections had been so mixed up with the royalist party before he was of age to choose for himself, that when that period arrived, he could not separate from it, without exposing himself to be branded with the name of an apostate. His friends continued to hope for what they desired long after their opponents exulted in the consummation of their triumph, and Lesley found himself stripped of fortune by the course which his father had taken. With every disposition to

Digitized by Google

better his circumstances by making his bow to those who were now in power, he could find no prospect of doing so with advantage.

There was an individual who had embraced the cause of the revolutionists, and had for a time resided in the neighbourhood of Lesley. He had removed, but not to a very great distance. This person, though he had not to reproach himself or his immediate ancestor with the folly of loyalty, and though he gained considerably by the part he had acted, was not exactly satisfied with the reward he had received. When treason proved successful, he was well disposed to regard the whole property of the nation as booty, and he was thoroughly persuaded that in the distribution of what was actually divided, his services had not been duly considered. This man and Lesley, when chance threw

Digitized by Google

them together, proved tolerably agreeable companions. The anger each had conceived against those with whom he had been connected, enabled both to express their minds sincerely without offence to each other, and this naturally led them to speak very philosophically of those party prejudices which had been long cherished with unnecessary heat, and in many instances with deadly violence. The Roundhead confessed the Cavaliers had been hardly dealt with, and the Cavalier, not to be behind in liberality, did not scruple to own that much of what his friends had suffered had been brought on them by their own folly. The individual with whom Lesley thus connected himself, it need hardly be stated, was no other than Johnson. The removal of the Roundhead from the neighbourhood of Lesley, abated their intimacy; but it was renewed at inter-

Digitized by Google

vals. Through this person, Lesley was introduced to Mr. Lee, a wealthy member of the opposite faction, and a retired soap manufacturer. It was pointed out to Lesley, that Mr. Lee was evidently in a consumption, and as in all probability he would take his departure from this world within a very moderate period, a person disposed to better his fortune, if he could; but succeed to Mr. Lee's place in the heart of his buxom dame, would at once raise himself to affluence which might enable him to defy future chances.

A hint like this was not lost on Lesley. He was not one of those imprudent people who suffer the head to be in a manner pushed aside by the heart, and reason to be overcome by feeling. He was capable of exercising such virtuous control over himself, that he never coveted any gratification for which others

Digitized by Google

might be induced to risk their future peace, till he had consulted his arithmetic, and found that to gratify his inclinations would not impair or endanger his means.

The idea then of carrying a rich widow, was to him most agreeable. That her family was not exactly what he could have wished, he might sometimes regret; but then the wealth of which she was to become mistress was so much to his taste, that he was generous enough to overlook the defect in the lady's blood, and hold it to be atoned for by the sterling merit of her gold. He fully made up his mind to marry her whenever Mr. Lee would afford him the opportunity, and the very promising cough of that gentleman justified his sanguine expectations, and was well calculated to call forth the most rapturous anticipation.

The friend who had given advice to one so likely to profit by it, might

Digitized by Google

indeed have taken a shorter course of benefiting Lesley. Johnson could have offered him his own daughter, and he was not without the means of giving with her what would have been acceptable to many a poor Cavalier. But the widow, (*as was to be*) was much richer than he could make his daughter, and besides this reason which his friendship suggested against inviting Lesley to become his son-in-law, he had two others, which with him were almost of equal weight. One was, that he had, when he directed his friend's attention to Mrs. Lee, what he deemed a more eligible match in his eye; the other, that he proposed in return for the good offices which he might render to Lesley with Mrs. Lee, to obtain the former's consent to his becoming the husband of Celia. Wishing to become the brother-in-law of his friend, he did not desire that complexity of union

Digitized by Google

which would have given Lesley a mother-in-law in his sister.

Mr. Johnson, as the lover of Celia, was not wholly moved by passion. Prudent calculation was as familiar to him as with his intended relation, Lesley; but it was not always persevered in with like steadiness. Though not blind to the beauty of Celia, his attention was fixed on the advantages likely to result from making his way into a family which would be connected with individuals of influence and authority, in the event of that change taking place which he had begun to think was almost to be looked for — the restoration of monarchy.

Johnson calculated on the good offices of his friend with Celia, and these were certainly no more than were necessary to secure the accomplishment of his purpose. Vanity or presumption might have been imputed, had he trusted

Digitized by Google

solely to his own personal merits. Mr. Johnson had in his favour the experience of more than fifty years. This, however, did not greatly add to the attractions of his exterior. His grey penetrating cloudless eyes were well sheltered from the rays of the sun, by the thick, bushy, overhanging brows which were stationed beneath the wrinkles of his forehead. His furrowed face was not exactly such as the hero of a love romance must wear, but his upright figure and gigantic frame commanded attention, and might in many instances have proved perfectly irresistible.

Circumstances, which it is unnecessary to set forth in this place, had caused him in some degree to estrange himself from the Lesleys for several months. Though sought more than once by his friend and former neighbour, he had declined seeing him. But about the time of Chal-

Digitized by Google

loner's visit he had again made his appearance. The cause of his doing so was first the rapid decline, and afterwards the death of Mr. Lee. Lesley was grateful for this mark of attention, and the loan which he obtained from Challoner gave him every opportunity he could covet of prosecuting his fortune with success.

When Johnson renewed his visits at Hornsey, he was rather discomfited to find that Albert, who had formerly been scarcely acquainted there, who was, in fact, only known as the youth entrusted to the care of Thorpe while receiving his education, had become a frequent visitor. Johnson set down his attentions to the right cause. He never doubted that Celia was the attraction for him. He would have openly attempted to baffle the hopes of the youth, but he had not sufficient confidence in female dis-

Digitized by Google

cernment to expect that the superiority which fifty-six years may give one man over another of but twenty, would be duly appreciated by a lady of eighteen. He, therefore, deemed it prudent not to enter the lists. His first resolve, was again to absent himself from Hornsey, that he might avoid meeting Albert. His plan of action was not matured, but he reflected, that it might be easy at a future period to be made known to Albert; while once recognised, the knowledge of his person could not be withdrawn.

His accidental meeting with Challoner had nearly defeated his object, that of keeping himself personally unknown to Albert. He was in imminent danger of being surprised in a situation of all others perhaps the most characteristic, and consequently, of all others, that in which he least desired to be seen. How he acted

Digitized by Google

on that occasion has already been told. Celia did not happen to observe him, and Albert, if he looked at him, took no particular notice of one who was to him a perfect stranger.

But notwithstanding, Johnson discontinued his visits, he had frequent conferences with Lesley. Pretending ill health, and great anxiety for his good success with the widow, he was waited upon at his house by his friend. When they met, he was not a little inquisitive about Albert. Thorpe, though enjoined not to let Albert know to whose bounty he was so largely indebted, had in confidence informed Lesley of the name of the benefactor. Lesley did not scruple to reveal it to Johnson. Less intimacy than subsisted between them would probably have led to such a disclosure, from the little chance which there was of its ever

Digitized by Google

reaching from that quarter any one of the parties whom it could in the slightest degree affect.

It was in one of these interviews that Johnson proceeded to unfold his views on Celia. Lesley was surprised at the disclosure, and somewhat at a loss how to answer. He was not shocked or disgusted that a man old enough to be the grandfather of his sister, should propose to become her husband. Whether or not Celia might be able to bestow her affections on such a suitor, was a matter which he did not think it worth while to consider. For himself he was content to marry where interest pointed, and it therefore was in his opinion perfectly reasonable to call on another to do the same. On this point he did not pause a single moment, as he had always considered the attractions of his sister among

Digitized by Google

the means by which he might be enabled to improve his prospects.

But he had long been of opinion that he could in no way accomplish this so directly as by bringing about a marriage between Albert and Celia. When a negative was put on this, he still clung to the hope which he had cherished, and had begun to scheme, with a view of getting the decision of Challoner revoked. When Johnson, however, had expatiated on his means, which he represented to be more considerable than his friend Lesley had ever suspected them to be; when he further pointed out the advantages which would be realised on his death, as it was his firm resolve to leave his undutiful daughter by a former marriage nothing more than a bare subsistence, it appeared to the prudent brother that such an offer was not to be slighted,

Digitized by Google

and he scrupled not to promise for his sister.

But as some appearance of consent on the part of Celia was necessary, Johnson advised that the matter should not be broken to her at once. Whatever value he might set upon himself, he certainly was well aware that there was some risk of his merit being overlooked among females, and especially among young ones. He wished Lesley first to train the mind of his sister to endure the idea of becoming Mrs. Johnson, before he should be announced to her in form. This Lesley undertook to do, and he kept his word. After noticing the obstacle to her union with Albert, which Challoner had thrown in the way, he pointed out to her the importance of settling at all events. He dwelt on the folly of being particular about youth or

Digitized by Google

appearance, when objects of much greater importance claimed attention. He expatiated on the countless benefits which would result to her and to all belonging to her, were a home like that which his friend Johnson could offer made securely hers. On this he enlarged with much emphasis, after he had paid his first visit of condolence to the widow Lee. In addition to the considerations which had pressed upon him before, he began to reflect, that, entering into the holy state himself, it might be peculiarly convenient that his sister should not remain beneath his roof.

Celia was little in the habit of controverting what her brother advanced, and she had no thought of doing so on this occasion. When Lesley spoke of what in his judgment would be desirable, she suspected not that he was paving the way to bring it about, and however Celia

Digitized by Google

might differ from him, she did not judge it would be wise to dispute with her brother on what she understood him to have advanced merely as a matter of opinion.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. II.

Thou art a fool.
The robin-redbreast and the nightingale
Never live long in cages.

WEBSTER.

LESLEY was resolved that no other wooer should have the start of him with the widow. Her excessive grief furnished him with an excellent excuse for making frequent enquiries after her health. Though she lived at some distance, having retired to Lambeth on the late sad event, Mr. Lesley went thither at least two or three times in each week. He had the courage to meet her tears and hysterics in their first flow and full vigour. These would have alarmed a novice, but they only served to encourage him. He had seen enough of the

Digitized by Google

world to know that affliction, like every other possession, is liable to be exhausted by a too profuse expenditure. Lesley was well aware that the carefully nursed and nourished grief of the matron might supply tears once a day for a quarter of a year, and gravity of speech and deportment for a still longer period; but he had often seen the spendthrift widow run through her whole stock of uproarious misery in a week or two; and after treating all her acquaintances with tears, sobs, and faintings at the commencement of the month, laughing heartily at a joke before its close.

And therefore believing things to be in a very promising state at Lambeth, he wished to enable his friend Johnson to indulge in like exultation with respect to Celia. He considered that all the needful preliminary steps had been taken, and resolved to break the whole affair

Digitized by Google

to her. This he did with little circumlocution, for an excess of sensibility was not among his foibles; and marriage was, in his opinion, so perfectly a matter of business, that had he been a merchant it would certainly have been as regularly entered on the debtor or creditor side, as the case might be, with the same regularity as a bale of goods shipped or received.

Celia heard her brother with infinite surprise. He remarked it, but could only suppose that it sprang from joy. Either this was his opinion, or he thought it policy to make her believe so.

"This fortunate change," said he, "in the aspect of our affairs, I see, gratifies you as much as it does me. Your good fortune is great; but some credit I take to myself for having led our friend to make an overture so highly advantageous."

"Surely," Celia replied, "you cannot

Digitized by Google

be serious. You cannot wish me to become the wife of Mr. Johnson."

"I was never more serious in my life; and I see so little cause for being otherwise, that I cannot persuade myself you have a doubt on the subject."

"It grieves me to hear it; for you will, perhaps, think me not overwise to decline what you deem so eligible."

"Decline—decline it! Are you in your senses?"

"Yes, brother, so I think. I am not conscious of any unwonted falling off."

"This amazes me. How can you regard the news I have brought you as other than most flattering?"

"Flattering it may be; but it is any thing but agreeable."

"And why? The property of Mr. Johnson I know to be large."

"That I believe. But you spoke not of his property."

Digitized by Google

"Nay, there I confess I was wrong. I ought to have named it. Without property I should have little to say on the subject. It is that which makes all the difference."

"But all the wealth on earth would not make me disposed to call Mr. Johnson husband."

"You seem absolutely insane. What can you object?"

"A little, perhaps, on the score of party. It would ill become a Lesley to marry into the family of one who had been the companion and agent, if no more, of regicides."

"It is not now that we ought to bring up the events of former days."

"I wish not to stir them up so that they shall become the source of discord and bloodshed; but it is due to our own character not to mingle, or, at all events, not indissolubly to unite ourselves with

Digitized by Google

those who have participated in the frightful guilt, which has brought general ruin on the loyal and the honest."

"But the opportunity of repairing that ruin now offers. Would it be wise to neglect it?"

"Yes, on such terms. Has it not occurred to you that my age does not qualify me to become wife to a man of Mr. Johnson's years.

"I really do not see that his age ought to raise any scruple in your mind. It is true that he is older than you, but what then? Is it not probable, nay, all but certain, that in a few years he will be no more, leaving you—for this is to be secured,—the rich inheritance of nearly all his means, ample as they are?"

"I am sorry," said Celia, "to differ from you; but pray let us say no more of Mr. Johnson. I cannot marry in the

Digitized by Google

hope of soon becoming a widow. I cannot promise affection to a husband who is more than old enough to be my parent. This seems not to me consistent with decorum."

"Nor can I think this scruple consistent with that delicacy which ought to be the great ornament of a female. I did persuade myself that your modest thoughts would not have ventured so far from their proper sphere, as to be roving after the follies of youthful gallantry."

"This reproof I have not merited."

"It was my hope," Lesley went on, "that you would never resemble those wretches, who, sacrificing every thing to passion, hold decent reserve and prudent calculations to be odious and contemptible, because they are incompatible with that forward folly which fills the streets with the miserable images of famished improvidence and ragged affection."

Digitized by Google

"Such remarks might be reserved till I am seen disposed to enter on a course so unwise—so fatal to those who pursue it. I am not in danger of doing this at present. If I seek not by an imprudent union to offend you, can you think that I claim too much, when I only wish to remain as I am?"

"I do not understand this childish trifling. If I am content to marry, not where I feel affection, or look for personal happiness, it is not much to expect that you should act a like part."

"You, brother, are master of your own actions;—nay, abate that frown, for, trust me, I would not offend you. Being as you are, I cannot think you will marry, but where inclination leads."

"True, but my inclinations, better trained than yours, turn but to the means which may extricate the name of Lesley from the degradation into which it has

Digitized by Google

fallen. You, methinks, might be content to co-operate with me. You ought not to wish evermore to continue a burthen."

"To this I will not reply as I might. It need not be said that the wreck of our fortunes was not produced by any decision of mine; yet I scruple not to assert, that had I been a man, the bold and generous step taken by my father should have been taken by me; nor do I hold, because misfortune has overtaken us, that we suffer degradation."

"The world thinks so, and the finger of scorn ever points at those who are depressed by poverty. It therefore behoves us to make every possible effort to meet the world on fair terms. Feeling this, I am willing to do my duty, and you, if you merit to be called sister of mine, will not be remiss on your part.

Digitized by Google

Already you have been a sufficient hindrance to me."

"I regret that I should have been so. Had I imagined that it would have tended to your comfort, there is no species of humble industry to which I would not descend, rather than give cause for these cruel reflections. I will not speak of any part of the little remnant of our father's property as being mine by right from his gift, but I have been restrained from striving more, because I feared to wound you, and not because I regarded honest industry as a punishment or a disgrace to myself."

"If so anxious to please me, now — now is the time to give the proof, by accepting this offer. Do this, and besides becoming rich and independent yourself, you will advance my fortunes."

Digitized by Google

"Press me not on this point — it cannot be."

"You are aware that Albert cannot marry you without offending the patron on whom his all depends. The determination of Challoner leaves you free with respect to him. Why — why, then, hesitate? Why not redeem our name from the humiliation which has long been its lot?"

"Because tenfold humiliation would attach to it, if I attempted its emancipation by the course you recommend. I can hardly think that it is urged in earnest. No, no, my brother would not see his Celia, from the sordid love of wealth, act the dishonest part of proffering affection where she could scarcely feel respect. Come what may, I will not be guilty of the meanness of feigning to love, where it would be painful to endure."

Digitized by Google

Little accustomed to be thus resisted, disdainful wrath glowed in the cheek of Lesley, and flashed in his eye. He did not further reprove, but his mind was wholly occupied with the refusal he had met. He could not bring himself to tell Johnson that he must think of Celia no more. That, in quest of which his ideas roved, was the means of compelling obedience. But how to effect this? He was restrained by no excess of love from having recourse to any compulsory measure which might be used with a prospect of carrying his point, and all he had to decide was, what description of severity would best tend to its accomplishment.

Preferring gentle, or at least, easy measures to begin with, his first proceeding was by incessant taunts and reproaches to make Celia impatient of being dependent on him. In this he succeeded, that

Digitized by Google

is, he effected his object so far as to make the situation of his sister more irksome than it had been. This was hardly necessary, for, constitutionally cold, his sullen deportment was ill calculated to console a youthful female for the early loss of her natural protectors. It was but seldom that he manifested any thing like passion; but his quiet and steadfast displeasure was more intolerable than the fiercest bursts of sudden wrath, as the awful death-like stillness of the boundless Saharra is more appalling than the rage of the ocean vexed by a storm.

To remain the object of the unfailing displeasure of a brother who wished to exercise a degree of authority over her, which not even a father could claim of right, was felt by Celia almost too much for endurance.

But whither could she fly? The cir-

Digitized by Google

cumstances of the times had scattered those friends and relatives who might have been willing to shelter her from persecution or from want. Though content to exercise arts which had been acquired as accomplishments to procure a livelihood, the induction into the way of so exercising them was wanting. There seemed no immediate escape from the sufferings to which she was at present exposed, but by consenting to receive the addresses of Johnson. But this thought was too hateful to be cherished for a moment, and in whatever else she might hesitate, she was determined to meet any persecution, and even death itself, rather than become the wife of a man whom she had never esteemed, but who, now that he had thus forced himself on her notice, seemed distinguished by the most odious characteristics of humanity.

Digitized by Google

While musing on the situation so painful to her, in which, by the scheming of Lesley she had been placed, a consoling thought at length presented itself to her mind. If she were to seek Challoner at Bedburn, it struck her that as the friend of her father she might prudently advise with him as to the course which it would become her to pursue. It was not impossible that among his connections he might be able to point to a secure and honourable asylum, where she could find protection. The hope might prove vain, but it was one which she could indulge.

On his part, Lesley's thoughts often darkly turned towards measures of coercion—measures which what then remained of law would not sanction, but which, in the case of a timid and helpless female, might be resorted to with impunity, and with almost the certainty

Digitized by Google

of accomplishing the object on which he had fixed his heart.

Celia proposed executing her plan on the earliest day, when it might be likely that her absence for some hours might pass unnoticed. The designs which occupied the mind of Lesley caused him to watch her movements with unwonted vigilance, and more than once induced a suspicion on her part, that he guessed her purpose, and was on the alert to defeat the attempt.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. III.

For very great considerations, the council of state gave me in money fifty pounds, and a pension of one hundred pounds per annum, which for two years I received. The cause moving them was this; they could get no intelligence out of France, although they had several agents there for that purpose.

LILLY's *History of his Life and Times.*

WE must now retrograde a little. It will be remembered that James Thorpe left Challoner and Lowen on the Surrey side of the river, to seek for an individual in that neighbourhood, whose presence he had said might be grateful to his father.

Landed at Lambeth, he repaired to that then celebrated temple of science, the house of the Tradescants. It was in the last days of its glory. The

Digitized by Google

first of that name had paid the debt of nature in the ordinary course of events; but his son, now at an advanced age, had recently seen consigned to the tomb that young man whom, with the fondness of parental love, he had hoped was destined to perpetuate the name of Tradescant, and extend the limits of the science to which his life, as well as that of his father, had been devoted.

Here James expected to see William Lilly, the conjuror. That such a person should be sought there, may excite surprise. But astrology in those days was held in greater respect than it is at present. The sages who undertook to interpret the *vox stellarum*, were treated as a reputable body. Lilly, by dint of impudence and good fortune, was deemed a personage of no small consequence, and men of true respectability, such as Tradescant and Ashmole, above aiming

Digitized by Google

at deception themselves, were slow to suspect imposture in others, and blushed not to admit to their society the contemptible cheat we have named.

Lilly, when the civil wars broke out, cared little about the success either of king or parliament, but where he supposed his own personal interests to be affected by their fortunes. He consulted not the stars, but the chances for and against each party, in order to determine to which he could adhere with most advantage. Circumstances proved to his satisfaction, that the revolutionists were those for whom prudence would declare, and he became a determined Roundhead. It answered his purpose well, and he for some years, obtained great credit for attachment to his party, as well as for wonderful skill manifested in his obtaining the earliest news from France, by observing the celestial bodies as he

Digitized by Google

pretended, but really from his being acquainted with the confessor to one of the French ministers.

When puritanical foolery began to grow old-fashioned, William Lilly, whether it was from the aspects or conjunctions of the heavenly bodies cannot now be ascertained, deemed it not improper to abate the stiffness of his deportment. He had applied himself to curry favour with Lord Fairfax by flattery, but of late he had thought that nobleman less zealous in the cause of the republic than he had once been; and Lilly, ready to go with the stream whenever the tide might turn, thought it advisable not to appear opposed to the cavalier-like gaieties which were regaining their former popularity. In consequence of this resolution, the exhibitions "with declamation," which Davenant ventured to give in Aldersgate

Digitized by Google

Street, had been graced with his presence, nor had he refused to witness the drolls at the Red Bull. It was in those places that he had met with James Thorpe.

The elder and only surviving Tradescant was at the scene of his botanical triumphs, when James reached his spacious mansion at south Lambeth. With much satisfaction he found that Lilly was then in the turret, from which the aged gardener was accustomed to issue his decrees for the government of the vegetable world below. The conjuror was not long in descending to welcome James, whom he conducted into the museum which had been formed by the Tradescants, and which was in fair weather much resorted to by the inhabitants of the metropolis.

James looked on the rarities exhibited with unaffected pleasure and admiration,

Digitized by Google

which those who have seen the museum such as it still exists, will perhaps, think justified by the objects it displayed. It may, however, be remarked, that such of its treasures as are now considered most valuable, were not those which then attracted the largest share of notice. A fragment of a thunderbolt, an egg furnished by a dragon, and one equally well attested to be that of a griffin, were especially pointed out as among the greatest valuables to be found there or anywhere else.

James was well disposed to laugh at anything that struck him as extravagantly out of the common way, but on this occasion he did not indulge his wonted humour. That the articles in question were in the "*Museum Tradescantianum*," proved, to his thinking, that what he had heard of the non-existence of such objects as dragons and griffins, must be

Digitized by Google

erroneous. He mentioned to Lilly what his previous impression had been, and this called forth the eloquence of the conjuror, which by the way, generally commenced with a query.

"You have heard, have you, that there are no such things in creation as dragons and griffins?" Here he allowed his head to repose on his right shoulder, on which it had been affectedly thrown with his eyes closed. With a very knowing leer he proceeded:—

"Now, Sir, what will you say when I tell you, that I myself have actually met with a traveller who has seen both?"

"Indeed! But your traveller did not draw a long bow did he? If so he might have brought one of them down."

"If you are going to laugh, my young master, why that's another matter," said Lilly, whose gravity was discomposed by the jocularity of James.

Digitized by Google

"Nay," said the latter, "they may be as common in some parts of the world, as pigeons are here, for aught I know. All I can say is, that I have heard some people reason very fairly, as I thought, against them."

"You have heard some people reason very fairly, have you?" Lilly answered or enquired; and then having again closed and opened his eyes with due deliberation, he added, "Now, Sir, I'll tell you what; —when a thing is, all the reasoning of all the lawyers that ever bawled and bellowed in Westminster Hall, would not prove to me that it is not."

"When you have seen it."

"When I have seen it, do you say? When I know it. I think those people very foolish, who will only believe what they see. Why, such people are like children; they know nothing but what comes before them. It is but a day or

Digitized by Google

two ago, that I met with an ignorant conceited fellow, who would not believe that it is impossible for heavy bodies to sink in the lake *Asphaltites*, or Dead Sea."

"I should doubt that myself, excepting, indeed, the bodies of certain worthies, who have naturally a tendency to the upper regions."

"Nay, Master Thorpe, this is no meet subject for merry jesting."

"I never said it was; but in sober truth, friend Lilly, I cannot swallow your lake *Asphaltites* at once.

"Can you not?" cried Lilly, putting on his most important look of all. "Why, now, do you know, that in this you resemble those uninformed people, of whom I spoke before. Why, Sir, Pliny tells us, that even bricks would swim in the Dead Sea."

"Does he, indeed! That must have been a great accommodation to the an-

Digitized by Google

cients, who, I suppose, had houses built on the water, in which they might go pleasuring, on their pagan holidays."

"This seems to tickle your fancy, but there are other things quite as extraordinary of which I could tell, however you may laugh."

"Nay, let not my laughter check your speech, for I, you know, am no conjuror. But why should bodies swim in the Dead Sea, which sink being thrown into the water everywhere else?"

"Why? You may as well ask me why the *flesh of the peacock corrupteth not*, or why a *king-fisher* hanged up by the bill showeth anon *from what quarter the wind blows*—why women swim prone, and men supine, that is, the latter on their backs, the former contrariwise; I mean, after being drowned and in the water nine days. All I can say of such matters is, they are known to be so, and they are

Digitized by Google

not to my conception more extraordinary or strange than many things which are seen every day. You would not believe at noon, that such a thing as night would ever come, did not experience certify the fact."

"True; and I have as yet been complimented with no certificate of the things which you have mentioned being facts."

"Because you have not put yourself in the way of it, or have not taken notice sufficiently. You, perhaps, never remarked that infants though commonly reputed to be unable to talk from their birth, nevertheless do discourse very excellent Hebrew from the first."

"The devil they do! Then I wonder your fond parents of great wealth do not hire Jewish rabbies to attend their nurses, that they may from time to time, be made acquainted with what the squalkers want."

Digitized by Google

"One reason against it is that it would make the little ones all the longer in learning the language of the country which they help to people; but past doubt it is that the Hebrew is what may be called Nature's vernacular, which first comes to the infant's tongue, whether he is born in Spain or in Poland, in Egypt or in England, exactly as barking may to a dog, or mewing to a cat, or,—or,—"

"Braying to an ass; that, methinks, may serve for your third illustration, which seems rather strangely to stick by the way."

"Or as braying to an ass; and, methinks, even reason is for this: for as dogs and cats can never more converse than they do at first, why should we, who are more noble in our nature, come into the world less completely provided for than they? But to go on with

Digitized by Google

our rarities — Is not yonder a noble *toad-stone?*"

"In size it might almost pass for a toad's head. It cannot be that this was ever in truth the contents of a toad's noddle."

"It cannot be! and why not? Why, you doubt every thing. I suppose you will next question the origin of those fine specimens of the *mandrake.*"

"Not I. Why should I?"

"You have had opportunities, then, of knowing that the mandrake grows spontaneously under gallowses, and other places of execution, springing, as it is supposed, from the dissolving particles of those who die there."

"No; I have not had an opportunity of ascertaining that; but, judging from the rest of what you tell me, I suppose this is not to be doubted. Do they grow nowhere but under gibbets?"

Digitized by Google

"Not commonly. You, of course, have noted their resemblance to the human form. Closer scrutiny will enable you to mark the distinctions of sex."

"My eyes are not good enough for that. I could never see camels in the clouds, or bulls and cows in the fire. Pray, Mr. Lilly, is this a young lady mandrake?"

"That is a female."

"A lady from Tyburn, I presume."

"It was taken from a spot of ground where a woman had been burned for the murder of her husband."

"O the jade!"

"And it was told to me, that when dug up to be given to him who brought it to Mr. Tradescant, it gave a remarkably loud shriek."

"I believe they usually set up a bit of a cry when they are removed."

Digitized by Google

"That every body knows."

"Certainly. But for all that, the mandrake crying at being torn from her native gallows furnishes a funny instance of local attachment."

They passed through the museum in this way; Lilly directing the admiration of James to what he deemed most rare. Among these were two newly-arrived plants, the value of which Mr. Tradescant had not had time to make himself acquainted with but by report. One was the *Rose of Jericho*, said to flower every year at noon on Christmas-eve; the other the *Sferra Cavallo*, which when in its prime was reputed to have the power of breaking iron. That these were what they were reported to be, Mr. Lilly professed devoutly to believe, though Mr. Tradescant himself had serious doubts.

To enumerate all the rarities which

Digitized by Google

were here to be seen would probably fatigue. It must, however, be mentioned, that the conjurer failed not to make his companion examine the objects described as follows in Mr. Tradescant's catalogue, published in 1656.

"Two feathers of the Phœnix' tayle.

"The claws of the bird Rook, who, as authors report, is able to trusse an elephant.

"A white blackbird.

"Penguin, which never flies for want of wings.

"Dodar, from the island Mauritius; it is not able to flie, being so big.

"Monkye's sceleton.

"Foot of a Ginny dog.

"A natural dragon, above two inches long.

"A doe's head and horns, from Saint James's park, neer London.

"Carbones ex Ætna.

Digitized by Google

" Half a hazel nut, with seventy pieces of household stuffe in it.

" A cherry-stone holding ten dozen of tortoise-shell combs, made by Edward Gibbons.

" A nest of fifty-two wooden cups, turned within each other, as thin as paper.

" A hollow cut in wood, that will fit a round, square, and ovall figure.

" A cherry-stone; upon one side St. George and the Dragon, perfectly cut, and on the other side eighty-eight emperors' faces.

" Indian conjurer's rattle, wherewith he calls up spirits.

" A piece of the stone of Sarrigo castle, where Hellen of Greece was born.

" An orange, gathered from a tree that grew over Zebulon's tomb.

" Blood that rained in the Isle of Wight, attested by Sir Jo. Oglander.

Digitized by Google

"A hand of jet, usually given to children in Turkey to preserve them from witchcraft.

"A sempitan, or trunck, wherewith they execute men to death with poysoned arrowes.

"Henry the 8, his { Stirrups, Hawke's hoods, Gloves.

"K. great porter's boots.

"Little Jeffreye's boots.

"Women's breeches from the Abisseenes.

"A purse made of a toad skin, a handfull long.

"*Skades*, to slide with.

"An umbrella.

"Tartarian saddle, with stirrups of wood, wherein he keeps his meat warm.

"A copper letter-case, an inch long, taken in the Isle of Ree, with a letter in

Digitized by Google

it, which was swallowed by a woman, and found.

"A steel glass, that shows a long face on one side and a broad on the other."

These several varieties were pointed out. James confessed he had never met with so vast an assemblage of wonders; and Lilly undertook for the perfect accuracy of all that his friend had advanced in his book, as well as for what was reported of those objects which, though in the museum, were not mentioned in the catalogue. The *umbrella* and the *skades* staggered James as much as the *Dead Sea* had done. He would not believe that umbrellas could be brought into common use anywhere so bulky as they appeared; and he laughed at the credulity of Lilly, who maintained that by means of *skades* a man might travel as rapidly as a fast-going horse.

Digitized by Google

James now invited the conjurer to accompany him to Hertfordshire. Lilly was willing to comply, but was doubtful whether he could immediately be spared; for he had just received a pressing message from a widow hard by, of the name of Lee, to resolve her certain questions. He had to wait upon her forthwith, to know, as he termed it, the bearing of her mind. James, on a late visit to Lesley, had learned enough to feel assured that he, in so kindly condoling with the widow at Lambeth, purposed repairing the loss she had sustained. He therefore no sooner heard Lilly mention where he was engaged, than he felt all impatience to see the mourner. In consequence of this, he pressed the astrologer so earnestly to let him accompany him to the house of the widow, that, eventually, Lilly agreed to take

Digitized by Google

him as a brother astrologer, the better to assure the applicant of correct answers to the questions she might propound.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. IV.

Although some of his astrological judgments did fail, I shall repeat some of his judgments which did not, being performed by conference with spirits.

LILLY's *History of his Life and Times.*

On their way from Tradescant's house, James made no secret of the motive which caused him so anxiously to desire an interview with the widow Lee, and Lilly was very particular in his enquiries as to the person, manner, and appearance of Lesley. They went through the gloomy alley which was then the principal street in Lambeth. This brought them in front of the Bishop's Palace, at that time partially occupied by the regicide Scot. Thence, turning to the right, and skirting the garden, they passed the house once the residence of Cardinal

Digitized by Google

Wolsey, and from Carlisle Lane, to Bishop Bonner's Palace, which now stands in what is called the New Cut, but which, at that period, was surrounded with gardens, in some measure befitting its ancient dignity.

Hither the disconsolate widow had repaired to indulge her unavailing tears for the loss of Mr. Lee, to entertain sentimental reflections on the past, and form prudent resolves for the future, such as matrons, who find themselves on the wrong side of forty, deem it essential to attend to before the attire of widowhood waxes old, and the tender languor of sorrow is rubbed off by the ordinary cares of life.

"Behold," said Lilly, "the abode of the comely widow. Now resolve me this, have you aught to add to what you have uttered respecting your friend, Lesley?"

Digitized by Google

"Nothing in the world."

"You are certain that he designs to offer marriage?"

"Truly, I have no doubt of it, for his sensibility is touched to see a woman of her substance so afflicted, and he deems it highly improper that she should continue to live alone."

"And his countenance, you have told me, is somewhat pale, but his eyes a good bright hazel, his figure tall but moderately sizeable, and his speech polite."

"All this is so; and if the widow be but in the right mind, I dare wager more than twenty pieces, this Lesley, formerly a captain in the service of the king, will readily engage to take all the stock in hand, once the property of the soap merchant, now defunct, from the wife to the wig."

They entered, and were ushered into the chamber, where the widow Lee

Digitized by Google

rested alone in all the pomp of sorrow. The casement near which she was seated opened on the garden in the rear of the building, and commanded an almost uninterrupted and boundless prospect. The vast area of St. George's Fields was then unoccupied, and this conducted the eye to a few detached buildings beyond the extremity of the Borough of Southwark, while more remotely the luxuriant fields and swelling hills of Kent appeared.

The widow occupied a large arm chair, and was attired in those weeds which form a sort of arbitrary character for grief. Her head reclined on her right hand, but her eyes were piously raised to heaven, as if the fond mourner had been in hopes of discovering there the beloved countenance of the late Mr. Lee. Her left hand clasped a white handkerchief, which people of refined

Digitized by Google

feelings regard as a very fine ingredient in the pathetic. This had been discovered before the time of the widow Lee, and so there was nothing original in that part of the arrangement. Every one then felt as every one now feels, that a tear dropped on snow-white cambric, is much more touching than the most copious flow of "briny sorrow," as modern taste elegantly expresses it, on a bird's eye, or other coloured pocket-handkerchief.

The door was opened with a solemn "Hush!" from the attendant of the widow; and the conjurer and his companion stood before Mrs. Lee for several seconds, ere it appeared that she was at all aware of their presence. Believing herself quite alone, she first breathed a deep sigh,—then her bosom heaved, and after this prefatory display of emotion she found her tongue.

Digitized by Google

"I shall see thee no more, my love!" she exclaimed, "and my lonely heart can know no rest; no peace till it rejoins thee in the regions of eternal day. Oh!"

Here the lady raised her cambric to her face, but seemed to wipe her forehead in the ecstasy of her grief instead of her eyes, and the tears which had dimmed their lustre, remained after her hand had tragically declined to its former position.

Lilly and James stared at each other, but for some moments neither spoke. The lady proceeded:—

"O death, death, bring me relief! you alone can ease my sorrows."

"I hope not, Madam," said Lilly, advancing towards the mourner.

"Ah!" cried the lady, with a look of infinite surprise and consternation, "can it be possible! men in my chamber!"

Digitized by Google

"Madam," said the conjurer, "I attend your pleasure."

"Pleasure!" echoed the widow; "pray, pray talk not of pleasure; it is sacrilege to use the word, now that, that—"

Here the recollection of the late Mr. Lee became too powerful for his gentle relict, and having risen, in her surprise at finding the apartment invaded, she would, perhaps, have fallen to the ground, had not James rushed forward and caught her in his arms, just as she was sinking in strong hysterics.

Lilly seemed much affected at that moment, and deplored the woes of the widow with great sincerity; not merely because he was touched by these evidences of conjugal piety, but because the skin of his shins had suffered materially from the precipitate advance of James, and his steeple-crowned hat had been trodden as flat as a pancake.

Digitized by Google

After a reasonable time had elapsed, Mrs. Lee gave signs of returning life. Her waiting woman brought water. Lilly began to use it rather copiously, which caused the lady to start from her chair in some disorder. She looked wildly at her company, and then exclaimed,—

"Where am I?"

"Most courteous lady," Lilly replied with a very formal bow, "you are here in Lambeth, and here also am I, William Lilly, professor of judicial astrology, come at your express bidding and invitation, having brought with me a very learned person, although he has the fortune to be junior to myself, and in some matters so to speak, but a tyro, being compared with me, yet, nevertheless, vastly accomplished."

"I entreat forgiveness," said the lady, "but grief destroys the memory,

Digitized by Google

and when I reflect on my irreparable loss, my only joy, the late Mr. Lee —"

Here the lady recommenced sobbing; and, symptoms of hysterics manifesting themselves, James undertook to console, and imitating the solemnity of Lilly, thus began: —

"Most amiable widow, never so far mistrust your stars, as to believe that the evil is quite irreparable."

"Ah!" said the widow, "could the dead revive; but, alas! that cannot be."

"Yet, Madam," said Lilly, "on looking, hastily I confess, over the scheme of your nativity, so far as the same hath yet been done, I discover therein much for hope."

"Alas! good Mr. Lilly, hope is not for me; yet I am curious to hear of the future, if there be that the knowledge of which might soothe. But what can there be in the future? do I not know

Digitized by Google

that my dear lord, the late Mr. Lee, is no more?"

"True, Madam, nevertheless you will do well to have recourse to that art, of which I am a professor. It may, for instance, ease you, by preventing these fits and hysterical affections."

"Indeed; can it do that?"

"O! in various ways this can be effected. When my first wife died, she wore under her arm-pit a scarlet bag, in which was a sigil, framed by Simon Foreman, who, as well as Captain Bubb, another astrologer, formerly resided in this neighbourhood. This was of pure angel gold, and of the size of a thirty-three shilling piece. On the one side was engraven '*Vicit Leo de tribu Judæ Tetragrammaton*,' with a cross, and within the image of a holy lamb; and on the other Amraphel, and three crosses, with '*Sanctus Petrus Alpha et Omega.*' This had

Digitized by Google

served to tranquillise her former husband's spirits, which were much disturbed, and it did the same for her. Simon Foreman, though not always good at aspects and configurations, was clever at the sigil. Now, the other way of curing fits, and that which I more frequently commend in female cases, is by means of a ring."

The lady sighed deeply while she enquired—

"By means of a ring! a ring, Mr. Lilly —what ring?"

"By a constellated ring. This was invented by Dr. Napper, who outwent Foreman in his knowledge of physic and holiness of life, he having provided a ring so constructed, as to combine divers potent sidereal influences, which effectually cured a young girl who had been epileptical. This ring some fanatical friends, after she had been cured

Digitized by Google

prevailed on the parents of the girl to cast away, which done, she became as before. Then the father would fain have got a new one from the same party, but the Doctor said, ' Nay, for those who throw away God's mercies deserve them not.' "

The lady remarked, with much feeling, that those who could thus scorn a ring so potent, merited no consolation.

" Now, such a ring," Lilly went on, " I can procure, but it would prove more effectual if it could be placed on your finger by one who is marked in your nativity as the *lamb in the ascendant.*"

" Or what do you think," James demanded, " of invoking the *Angel Salmon?*"

" Why, I pray," said Lilly, who did not wish to be interrupted at that moment, " should the angel *Salmon*, who is

Digitized by Google

of the nature of *Mars*, be invoked on an occasion like this?"

"As to that," said James, who could not help letting something of his real character break through his assumed one, "when any thing symbolical of matrimony, such as a ring, for instance, is in question, what can be more natural than to look for a spirit of the nature of *Mars*?"

"I," said Lilly, "am not favourable to that process. When angels are required to give their prophecies vocally, it is rare for any operator to make them speak articulately. They mutter, like the Irish, much in the throat. If then the invoker have not a very quick ear, he may be deceived; and experience hath taught, that inspection of the crystal in types and figures, or by apparition, the circular way, where at some distance the

Digitized by Google

angels appear representing, by forms, shapes, and creatures, what is demanded, cannot always be depended upon."

"I fear," said the lady, "nothing can be depended upon that would seem to proffer me relief."

"Never despair. To you I would say, in words of the old Scotch prophecy, '*Sed ne desperes quæ tantis;*' but, it may be, you would prefer it as Englished.

'And yet beware, thou not distrust,
Although o'erwhelmed with grief;
Thy stroke is not perpetual,
For thou shalt find relief.'"

"Alas!" sighed the widow, "in my case this is a false prophecy."

"Not so," Lilly rejoined; "for if the ring of which I spoke be put on by the lamb, your pains shall cease on the instant. Now, therefore, the main point is to ascertain who the lamb should represent."

Digitized by Google

"Ay, how had we better manage with the lamb?" James enquired. Lilly answered, —

"I could repair to the crystal, as Hodges did when my old partner John Scott went to him on the affair of his marriage, and desired to see whom he should wed."

"And what chanced thereupon?" demanded Mrs. Lee.

"Hodges had Scott's foot put to his, and looking in the crystal Scott saw a ruddy wench in a red waistcoat, drawing beer. 'That,' quoth Hodges, 'is your wife.' 'Nay,' said the other, 'for I am to marry a tall woman in the Old Bailey.' Then Hodges swore, for his language answered not to the purity of his angels, which were Raphael, Gabriel, and Uriel, 'Marry her you must, whether you would or not,' and so he did this same beer

Digitized by Google

girl, whom he afterwards found in a buttery at Canterbury."

"Ah, the crystal can be of no use to a lonely, hopeless being such as I am! Nevertheless, if you have curiosity, this may be tried for your satisfaction, good Mr. Lilly."

"Truth, to say, Madam, for reasons already given, I am little partial to that mode of proceeding; and after reading, as I have done, with most curious attention, *Valentine Naibod*'s Commentary upon *Alcabitino*, and also all the best expositions of Ptolemy, I consider there are other and better ways of getting at the truth, which many nibblers at astrology cannot use. He who is figured as *the Lamb*, must be one of good height, and fair proportion. Know you such a man?"

"I recollect not."

Digitized by Google

"With complexion somewhat pale and bright hazel eye."

"Ha!" exclaimed the lady, "I dare almost suppose—"

"His address polite," continued Lilly, "with military air."

"You have well described the *Lamb*, brother," James remarked.

"The picture you have drawn is that of a friend," said the mourner, "who indeed is willing to console."

"And he will do it," cried the conjurer, with increasing confidence. "You know the party, then. What call you his name?"

"He of whom I speak is named Lesley."

"Lesley! — what Captain Lesley of Middlesex!"

"The same. He was once a captain."

"There, Madam, it is. You see it is

Digitized by Google

right even to a letter, L stands for Lesley, and also for *Lamb.*"

"And that is the cause why in the cast of the widow's nativity he who should put on the constellated ring is marked as a *lamb!*" James remarked, leering satirically on his friend, the conjurer.

"Not merely for that," Lilly replied, "but in another respect the lamb most wonderfully applies to this same Lesley."

"Indeed?" sighed the widow.

"How may that be?" demanded James.

"Even thus. When Cromwell and Fairfax had routed Prince Rupert and the Earl of Newcastle, near York, one of Newcastle's regiments having got into a small piece of ground ditched in, would take no quarter, and for more than an hour kept the horse from entering among them at push of pike. Those beaten

Digitized by Google

down would still strive against the troopers, who passed over them in the end. Nearly all were killed; but for this admired valour, the lives of a few were saved against their will, and Lesley's father was one."

"Methinks, then, your lamb comes from a lion."

"Now observe: — This regiment had been newly clothed in white but a few days before, and therefore they were commonly called *Lambs*. See you the application?"

"Most clearly. Never was astrology more decidedly right. Most amiable widow, it is to the *Lamb* you must look for comfort, and seeing he is in your nativity, take him soon to your arms. Joy attend you."

"Joy," exclaimed the widow, shaking her head and closing her tearful eyes,

Digitized by Google

"talk not of joy or comfort. These, alas! in this world I shall know no more."

Here she shrieked and fainted. James and Lilly again assisted the mourner, and when at length she revived, as she wished to be alone, they retired, almost as much affected as she was, but still of opinion that the *Lamb* might eventually yield the sorrowful widow substantial consolation.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. V.

Arraign him on the sudden, ere provided:
Let him not dream upon evasive shifts,
But take him unprepared.

HEYWOOD.

We left Albert not a little surprised at what he had heard and seen at Redburn. He found it in vain to seek rest after Challoner had retired from his chamber.

If he laid down, and forgetfulness began to come over him, some incident which had perplexed before, again occurred to him, precluded repose, and he rose while it was yet scarcely light.

He left his room and walked in the garden. His attention was naturally attracted to the part where he had seen

Digitized by Google

Challoner digging while silence and darkness prevailed. Though the ground had evidently been lately disturbed, he could not distinguish the exact spot where the spade was last at work. No pit had been left, and Albert was only certain that it was on some part of a spacious bed which had been apparently prepared for the reception of flowers, that the individual he had seen was stationed. At the extremity of this bed he remarked an ash tree, which he doubted not was the same which Thorpe had mentioned.

He had had little time for reflection when he saw Challoner approach.

"I see," he remarked, "whither your thoughts tend, nor can I wonder at it. Had I not proposed to explain, trust me, you would not have witnessed my nocturnal operations. Though I expected your youthful eyes would have been ready to welcome sleep the most

Digitized by Google

profound, I had not risked the chance of your waking but for the reason which I have given."

Albert felt it necessary to account for his watchfulness.

"It was not my intention," he said, "officiously to pry into your affairs. I felt no idle curiosity as to the way in which it might be your pleasure to employ yourself, but hearing a sound most unusual in the dead of night, I deemed it not improper to ascertain whence it proceeded. This drew me from my couch, and had I not thought that him I could first discern was no other than yourself, it is more than probable that I should have hastened to apprize you of the circumstance."

"Let us leave the garden," said Challoner; "the house will afford us more secure privacy."

He then led the way into a low wains-

Digitized by Google

cotted parlour, in which breakfast had been prepared. Neither manifested any great disposition to eat, though each took food to satisfy the other. The rose which Albert had seen on the preceding night had been placed on a small table by the side of Challoner, and to this, save when his eyes were fixed on the countenance of his guest, his looks were almost incessantly directed."

"I scarcely know," said he, "on what subject I ought first to speak. Whether I ought to apply myself to what has already engaged your attention, or begin with other matters, and arrive at that as the sequel of my tale."

He paused as if suitably to arrange what he desired to communicate, and was about to break silence again, when the voice of Thorpe was heard at the door. Challoner rose to let him in, and

Digitized by Google

remarked as he did so, that the visitor appeared in remarkably good spirits.

"I have no slight reason," said Thorpe, "to be exhilarated, for I have hopes that I shall yet live to see the end of my troubles."

"I shall be glad to congratulate you," said Challoner, "on such a consummation; but by what means do you hope to arrive at it?"

"Nay, you will rejoice to learn that it is even already accomplished in part. This morning, moved to it by our good friend Lesley, one has been with me to commit to my custody, for a season, the *Lee Penny*, which he has succeeded, through his intimacy with a member of that family, in borrowing from the Laird of Lee."

"And what," demanded Challoner, "is the *Lee Penny?*"

"It is this which you see," replied

Digitized by Google

Thorpe, exultingly displaying a small dark red stone, of a triangular shape, rudely set in a piece of silver, which had once been in circulation as a coin, and which, from the cross and the letters still visible, appeared to have been a shilling of the time of Edward the First.

Challoner examined the *Lee Penny* with some attention, but soon returned it, with a look of surprise and an expression of countenance which spoke him reluctant to indulge in any comment on this subject.

"Have you seen it before?" Thorpe enquired.

"I do not know. This is one of those objects which, without any great effort of forgetfulness, might be speedily dismissed from memory."

"Then you cannot have heard its history."

"It may be so, and I am not very cu-

Digitized by Google

rious to know all that can be told of this, or any trinket of like virtue."

"To me it seems there are some things which you greatly undervalue."

"I doubt it not."

"And this is one of them."

"That I do doubt."

"Then know, Sir, that this stone has been in the same family for nearly three hundred and forty years."

"Sir, I am too vulgar in my ideas to esteem a worthless man on account of his being of an old family, and I am not more disposed to attach importance to a paltry stone for its antiquity, than to a fellow-creature who can boast of nothing but his genealogy."

"But this stone's least claim to notice is that which rests on its age. When Sir Simon Locard, of Lee, carried the heart of King Robert Bruce to the Holy Land, it was his fortune to make a Saracen pri-

Digitized by Google

soner on his way. The wife of the prisoner came to ransom him, and while telling over the sum to be paid, this stone fell from a purse of jewels which she carried. The impatient eagerness with which the lady sought to recover it attracted the notice of Sir Simon, who, being a man of great discernment —"

"Perceived all its wonderful virtues at once," said Challoner, sarcastically anticipating the sequel of a narrative which almost provoked, from its extravagance, a mirthful smile even from him.

"I do not state that," said Thorpe, "but Sir Simon saw that great importance was attached to it, and he therefore refused to liberate the Saracen unless that stone were handed over to him. The lady expostulated, but in vain, and at length she gave it to the knight, first instructing him in the many virtues which belonged to it."

Digitized by Google

"Indeed! and what were they?"

"By dipping this stone into the water from which cattle are permitted to drink, all disease among them will be prevented. It thus most effectually counteracts some of the charms of those who have commerce with the devil, for the purpose of harming their neighbours' property. Used in the same way, it is, moreover, a sovereign cure for the bite of a mad dog. No words are to be uttered when the stone is dipped, and therefore no mistake can be made."

"I dare say not. And can you really have faith in this nonsense?"

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Thorpe, "I do not call it nonsense."

"Well, perhaps I might have used a better expression; but I fall sometimes into my servant's habit, of giving things too unceremoniously their proper names. To speak seriously, I much regret to see

Digitized by Google

you imposed upon, for so I think you are, by stories of this sort."

"Nay, if I am imposed upon, it is in very good company. Many have gone wearisome journeys to seek relief from the wonder-working powers of this same stone; nor is the period remote, when the inhabitants of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, finding the plague very prevalent in their town, applied to the Laird for the loan of the *Lee Penny*. Their prayer was granted, a large sum of money being deposited in trust for the same, and its powerful effects were soon so visible, that the borrowers would gladly have given a great price for it, if the Laird had been disposed to sell it."

"I judge, then, this said stone does not give the possessor wisdom, whatever else it may bestow, or the Laird would have taken the money."

"You, Master Challoner, seem to be

Digitized by Google

of opinion that no importance can attach to such a stone."

"I certainly am of opinion that to no object on earth belongs the magical influence ascribed to this bauble."

"Holding this belief, you strangely fly in the face of well-attested history."

"What history of such modern miracle is well attested?"

"Know you not that by the law of the land, in cases of appeal for murder, the parties to the trial by battle are required, before they engage in combat, to swear that they bear upon them no bone, stone, or grass, by which each may injure the other."

"I believe the oath goes on declare, in connection with the expressions you have quoted, 'nor have done anything, nor any other for them, whereby the law of God may be depressed and the law of the devil exalted.' Is it on the expres-

Digitized by Google

sions of this oath that you mean to establish the healing virtues of the *Lee Penny?*"

"Not so, for the Laird of Lee having been traduced by some envious malecontent, submitted the stone to the inspection of a solemn synod at Glasgow, and their decision being in his favour, he stands fully authorised to use it."

"I think he may be allowed to do so with much safety."

Challoner was still speaking, when Robert burst into the room, with an air of precipitation which was unusual with him, and which announced that something out of the common way had occurred.

"How now!" cried Challoner, who was surprised at this appearance of hurry. "Why such disorder? What is the matter?"

"Murder!" was the reply.

"Murder!" repeated Albert, while

Digitized by Google

his thoughts wildly turned to what he had heard and listened to in the course of the night. His eyes involuntarily sought those of Challoner, who, startled by the abruptness with which his question had been answered, manifested all that horror which the name of a crime so appalling was fitted to inspire.

"Of what do you speak?" he demanded of Robert. "Has a murder been perpetrated in this vicinity?"

"Not far off, Sir. A man has just brought word that St. Albans is all up in arms, in consequence of its having been found that Dame Neville was murdered last night."

"Good God!" exclaimed Albert, while with agonising regret he recalled the circumstances under which they had last parted.

Thorpe also manifested surprise, but felt less shocked at the event than any

Digitized by Google

one else. Though naturally humane, his mind had been so disturbed by those casualties which he ascribed to witchcraft, that putting a witch to death he could scarcely regard as a murder in any case; for, with the strong abhorrence which he had conceived for those practices of which he believed himself to be the victim, he deemed a witch's connection with humanity so slight, that no measures could be too summary or too severe.

The comparative ease which he had enjoyed since the *Lee Penny* had been in his keeping, he now began to suspect might not be exactly owing to the miraculous virtue of that stone, as it struck him that it was by no means improbable the death of the witch was the true cause of the relief he experienced. Dame Neville being dead, her fire might have gone out,

Digitized by Google

and if so he judged it reasonable to assume that his pain must abate as the roasting of his waxen image before the hell-kindled flame could no longer go on.

These sentiments he stated to Challoner, who, incredulous as ever, still lamented the miserable delusion under which Thorpe laboured. He pointed out the folly of suffering his rest to be interrupted by such wayward fancies, and argued that if Dame Neville had possessed but a tenth part of the intelligence for which he had given her credit, she could hardly have been destitute of the means of guarding her own life.

But to this, Thorpe could by no means be brought to subscribe. According to him, the beings who were at one time armed with the most terrific powers, were at others the most defenceless of all wretches on earth. "The devil," he said, "who had been a deceiver from the first,

Digitized by Google

would often turn round on his own agents, and blast them with his fiery breath."

"But not unless he has become insane, while the witch so assiduously labours to serve him as you represent Dame Neville to have done to the last hour of her existence."

"Nay, as to that," said Thorpe, "no mortal can account for his inconsistencies."

"But you, with a little careful enquiry, might account for your ills and misfortunes, without referring to him or his agents."

"Really, your obstinate scepticism fills me with amazement. Could I be mistaken when I spoke of my own feelings?"

"Most egregiously, when you supposed the pain you felt to have any thing to do with the actions of Dame Neville."

Digitized by Google

"The opportunity is favourable to afford you conviction on this point. Doubtless, in consequence of the event which has taken place, her cottage is open to all comers. Let us repair thither forthwith, and then you will be satisfied that I am not the visionary you have supposed me to be."

"Though I feel no curiosity, I have no objection to accompany you so far; and I am not without hope, that the result will be favourable to your future repose, by proving your error."

They prepared to leave the cottage, and Albert consented to accompany them. He had taken no part in their conversation, which, indeed, was scarcely heard by him, so absorbed had he been by those reflections which grew on Robert's news.

He could not doubt that the groans which had arrested his attention were con-

Digitized by Google

nected with the murderous act which had been perpetrated. But he was amazed to find Dame Neville had outstripped him, for the place from which he had heard the sufferer was in advance of that at which he found himself when he first perceived on his return that he was not the only wanderer. He concluded that some shorter way being known to Dame Neville, she had taken that for the purpose of again speaking to him.

Who the murderer could be, and what the motive which had prompted the crime, were circumstances involved in deeper obscurity. As booty could hardly be looked for, he inclined to the belief that hostility on account of her supposed evil doings as a witch had brought her to her end, but by what hand she had fallen, it was not in his power to guess.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. VI.

Here's nought but whispering with us.
Like a calm
Before a tempest.

CHAPMAN.

THEY directed their steps towards St. Albans. Thorpe and Challoner were engaged in solemn conversation, but Albert continued silent. This was remarked upon by Thorpe, who also noticed the extraordinary emotion which he had manifested, though he had not spoken.

"I," said Albert, in answer to a question which Thorpe put to him on this subject, "am really much shocked at the event. You know, Sir, I have never made a secret of my thoughts respecting Dame Neville. I believed her

Digitized by Google

any thing but the guilty being you supposed her, and cannot help fearing that she has lost her life through the calumnies which ignorance and prejudice have circulated."

Thorpe was about to reply to this, when two labourers, one of whom was in his employ, drew near, apparently coming from St. Albans. He called to them to know if they had been to see the witch.

"Nay," was the answer.

"I supposed," said Thorpe, "you had been to St. Albans."

"So I have, Master," one of them said, "but the witch ben't there not yet."

"What have they not removed the body?"

"Yes, the dead body be there; but the witch ben't fetched while the time I came away."

Digitized by Google

"But is not the witch dead?"

"Nay, not a bit of it. The old one takes too good care of that, more's the pity, and won't let his darling children die so easily, Master."

"And are you certain, Hodge, that what you now tell me is true?"

"Quite sure of that."

"Then we have been deceived. News came to Redburn, that the witch, Dame Neville, had been murdered last night."

"Yes, Master, it was so told at first, the reason whereof was only this, that the poor body who is dead, Goodman Smith's widow, was found in a cloak and hood which had been the witch's."

Albert who had listened with intense eagerness to the foregoing conversation, now learned that the poor woman he had seen at Dame Neville's, and who offered to accompany him over the fields, was

Digitized by Google

the person struck by the hand of an assassin, nor doubted but it was her dying groans that had reached his ear.

"Since it is not the witch that is dead," said Thorpe, "it will be to no purpose that we should go on."

"Yes it will Master," cried Hodge, "for the witch is now gone for, and will soon be there."

"And why is she to be brought to St. Albans?" Challoner demanded.

"Because when it was found that the murdered woman was wearing the witch's garments as she lay not a long way from where Dame Neville lives, the constables and folks went there, and she confessed."

"Confessed!" exclaimed Albert. "That is impossible!"

"You may say that," the man rejoined, "but it is all true. She openly confessed that poor Goody had been with

Digitized by Google

her last night, and that she had given her the clothing which she had on to help her through the winter, and this, she said, if needs be, she could prove by others."

"And so she can," cried Albert.

"Thorpe and Challoner looked round, surprised at the confident tone in which Albert spoke. He was in that moment about to reveal all he knew, when he judged it right to pause. It was not certain, that such testimony would be necessary. If it should be, she could at any time call for it, and he considered that if he volunteered his evidence in her favour on the present occasion, by establishing a friendship or intimacy between them, it would weaken the effect of any interference by him on the further trial to which it was intended that she should soon be subjected. He therefore refrained from making the statement

Digitized by Google

which he had been about to offer, and turned aside the enquiring amazement of his companions, by calmly adding —

"I think it not improbable that she speaks truth, for why should the poor woman venture an assertion, which, if false, could be so easily shewn to be so?"

No remark was made on this observation, and Challoner further questioned the man as to the occasion of Dame Neville being brought to St. Albans.

The answers given were to this effect. Though nothing appeared to contradict what the witch had advanced, yet the present moment was thought favourable for gaining positive evidence of her guilt, if she were really criminal, by bringing her to where the dead body lay, and inviting her to take the corpse by the hand; on doing of which, if the murder had been perpetrated by her, the countenance would forthwith undergo a change

Digitized by Google

which must denote the same. With this impression, the minister of the parish, two magistrates, and several discreet inhabitants, were resolved to put Dame Neville to the proof.

Thorpe much approved of the wisdom thus manifested, and appealed to his friend Challoner, if it were not highly creditable to their zeal.

"More creditable to their zeal than to their understanding," was his answer. "The examination to which they propose to subject this poor woman has, however, the merit of being harmless. If she is not to be dealt harshly with, till the dead person changes countenance, there is little to fear, and I have no curiosity to know the result."

"But I," said Thorpe, "am most anxious to learn what shall follow."

"Then, hie to St. Albans. But since we shall not have the opportunity of

Digitized by Google

searching the witch's abode for the charmed fire which you supposed the cause of your pains, I shall not walk so far this morning."

"Nay, you will do well to be present at this trial."

"I prefer being away. I have no reverence for such superstitious folly."

"But why, my good and worthy friend, should you so describe this solemn proceeding? Is it possible that you have never heard how a horrid murder was thus brought home to the perpetrators in the late reign.' "

"I have heard many stories, but none ever convinced me that this was a rational way of attempting to ascertain whether or not a suspected person was guilty."

"Then you ought to be informed, that such it was proved to be early in the time of the king, when one Joan Norkett,

Digitized by Google

wife to a man named Arthur Norkett, being found dead in her bed with her throat cut, was thought to have committed suicide. So was it found by the coroner and jury. Afterwards, strong suspicion arose against the husband and others, whereupon the body was taken from the grave, and the parties believed to be privy to the death, were required to take the deceased by the hand."

"And could it be imagined, that doing this would lead to anything that ought to be deemed of importance in a question affecting the life of a fellow creature?"

"Sir, the instant the hand of the dead person was touched, the brow which was before of a livid and carrion colour, began to have a dew or gentle sweat upon it, which increased by degrees till the water ran down in drops upon the face. The countenance then became of a

Digitized by Google

fresher colour, the eyes opened and shut three times, and what proved beyond all doubt the criminal participation of the husband, was this, that the marriage finger was thrust forth as often and dropped blood upon the grass. These are facts."

"To me, they seem incredible."

"But they were sworn to by witnesses of good repute, and the murderers were executed."

"On better proof of their misdoings, I should hope, than any change in the appearance of a corpse could supply."

Thorpe could not but again express his regret at the unbelieving spirit which he remarked in Challoner, who, however, declined going to St. Albans, being unwilling to countenance such an experiment so far as to be present at it. Albert was anxious to witness it, not that he, any more than Challoner, calculated that

Digitized by Google

proof either of guilt or innocence could thus be obtained, but he was desirous of knowing what interpretation might be put on her conduct, or on any statement she might offer, and, above all, to be at hand if any testimony which he could supply would serve the accused.

Challoner parted from them and returned. Albert and Thorpe went forward, the latter continuing to laud the wisdom of the magistrates, and maintaining that even the giving of her accursed attire, if proved against the witch, ought to be taken into serious consideration, as that circumstance might have been the means of producing the catastrophe.

"What, Sir," said Albert, "if a kind-hearted being should desire to relieve distress, and the individual befriended have the misfortune to perish by another hand in consequence of going forth to obtain the relief, would you, therefore, put to

Digitized by Google

death the unoffending party, whose only offence was charity?"

"I am not sure that the garments in question were not given for an evil purpose, in order to destroy the unfortunate creature the wretch pretended to relieve."

"Nay, Sir, where are the grounds for this suspicion? I see none, and I trust even with you it will be set at rest, if no such appearances as you describe to have been produced in a former case, should be seen to-day."

As they entered St. Albans, a murmur ran through the crowd, that the witch was come. This proved to be a false rumour. Though Dame Neville did not hesitate to obey the summons, the throng which pressed about the officers, sent to bring her to the town, so impeded their advance, that more than an hour had elapsed after the arrival

Digitized by Google

of Albert and Thorpe, when they saw Dame Neville escorted into St. Albans.

The corpse was then brought forth, wrapped in a white cloth. It was placed on a long table which had been previously carried into the street. The cloth being withdrawn, the remains of the deceased were exhibited in the bloodstained garments which had belonged to her. A cry of horror ran through the assembled multitude, which gradually died away into silence, while every eye after resting on the dead body with astonishment and horror, sought for the supposed perpetrator of the murder. Albert saw with anguish his surmise confirmed, and perceived that the deceased was no other than the female he had met on the preceding night at Dame Neville's. The grim and ghastly expression which had now taken the place of the unconscious smile which played in her healthful face,

Digitized by Google

while she accosted him, struck him forcibly, and he shuddered to trace the ravages which a few brief hours had sufficed to effect in one so recently seen in all the vigorous bloom of mature life.

His attention was called from the cadaverous aspect of the deceased, to mark the proceedings against Dame Neville. The magistrates in bringing her forward, told her that if she were really innocent, it could not be other than gratifying to her to be subjected to this trial. If she feared it, they said, it was not their intention to compel her to submit to it, but from her declining to touch the murdered woman, they and all present could not choose but draw conclusions, which would certainly be any thing but favourable for her.

Thus professing not to force the suspected to the test, yet intimating in no ambiguous language, that by avoiding it,

Digitized by Google

she would supply that confirmation of the suspicions excited, which it was the object of this exhibition to procure, they hardly left her an alternative.

Pale as the lifeless form which she approached, Dame Neville was led forward. The minister of the parish exhorted her to be of good cheer, if she carried with her a blameless conscience, for he who had power over the devils themselves, would not suffer the slightest infraction of his laws on an occasion like that, to the peril of the innocent. He therefore called upon her, if she had previously spoken truth, to look up and fear not.

This encouraging address was unheard by the living victim. Her mind had received a severe shock by the event which many had assumed was the work of her hand. She had more reason to feel deeply affected by it, than she had

Digitized by Google

revealed to any mortal. The languor which appeared in her countenance, and the general debility remarked as she advanced, were by some considered but the evidences of dismay, the inseparable attendant of guilt; and Thorpe, who was one of these, began seriously to believe that the Evil One whom she had served had deserted his votary.

But these unfavourable impressions, if too generally prevalent, were not universal. There were those who thought they recognised the dignity of virtue in affliction, and who saw in the weakness which she manifested, no more than might be expected in a lonely unprotected female thus circumstanced; and all admitted, when the hood which she had previously worn was removed, that there was nothing in Dame Neville resembling what they had imaged to themselves as the likeness of a witch.

Digitized by Google

Having reached the dead body, Dame Neville bent sadly over the disfigured remains of the unfortunate object of her bounty. The big tear trembled in her eye while she recalled the fatal effects of her charity.

"She hesitates, and will not touch it," Thorpe whispered to Albert.

"She is shocked," said Albert, "at the awful spectacle to which her attention has been drawn."

"What will ye that I should do?" enquired the trembling Dame Neville.

"If you be innocent," a magistrate answered, "appeal to God that you are so, holding at the same time the hand of the murdered person."

"To Him who sees all hearts — to the God who gave me being," Dame Neville cried, raising her voice somewhat above the tone in which she had spoken

Digitized by Google

before — "to him who knows that I am guiltless of this murder I appeal."

While speaking, she took the hand of the dead woman into hers.

The solemnity with which she spoke, and the tranquil, though sad expression of her countenance, produced no unfavourable impression on those who were near enough to see her features, and hear her words. The most awful silence prevailed. No change was remarked in the deceased, and it was intimated to the suspected party that she might release the hand.

That moment, a spectator called out, "A sweat begins to arise on the dead countenance!"

"And so there does!" Thorpe exclaimed. "It is bedewed on a sudden."

A murmur of acquiescence and admiration was beginning its course, when

Digitized by Google

Albert rushed forward and stood by the supposed witch.

"Hold!" he exclaimed, in a tone of authority, which instantly gained silence. "Do not rashly accuse. It is true that the countenance of the murdered woman is bedewed. It is true that it was not thus before, but it was from the full eye of the accused, who was her benefactress while she lived, and who now weeps over her in death, that the damp which you perceive descended."

A doubtful whisper replied to this address. Albert went on.

"Behold, now that Dame Neville stands apart; the dew increases not. Wipe it away, and though she again hold the lifeless hand, it shall not return, so those floods of woe and pity, which are falling from her eyes be not that way directed."

Digitized by Google

He placed the hand of the corpse in that of the female, in whose behalf he had spoken. Dame Neville recognised her friend, and her tears fell faster than before. His words — the action by which they had been accompanied, and the mournfully interesting appearance of the Dame, all combined with the unchanging aspect of the corpse, induced conviction that in this instance she had been wrongly suspected, though there were not wanting those who muttered that if she had not committed the murder, she ought to be hanged for a witch.

The magistrates, however, decided that there were no grounds for detaining her, and she was permitted to withdraw. Thorpe expressed some surprise at the course taken by Albert, but no anger, for he was satisfied that the dew on the countenance of Goody Smith had been ascribed to its true cause. He only re-

Digitized by Google

marked that because the witch had not committed this murder, it was not to be supposed that she was guiltless of other matters. This, he added, would be seen when Matthew Hopkins arrived.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. VII.

When I behold a factious band agree,
To call it freedom when themselves are free —
Fear, pity, justice, indignation start,
Tear off reserve, and bare my swelling heart;
Till half a patriot; half a coward grown,
I fly from petty tyrants to the throne.

GOLDSMITH.

WHEN Challoner had received the news of the manner in which the enquiry, or examination rather, had been conducted, and of the part which Albert had taken, he expressed the warmest approbation of the humanity and presence of mind which he had displayed in the cause of the accused. He welcomed Albert on his return with the most cordial greeting.

"This," said he, "is as it should be. I see with exultation that with a benevolent heart you possess a capacity which

Digitized by Google

promises to give the best direction to its generous impulses, and cannot but prove highly important in times like those in which it is our lot to live. Great events will yet take place before that generation, which has already witnessed some of the mightiest convulsions recorded in our history, shall have passed away."

"This, Sir, has for some time past been my opinion."

"It is not matter of conjecture, but of certainty, and the time is fast approaching, nay, is all but arrived."

"Indeed!"

"And even now the moment is at hand, when, from your fitness, which this day has proved, I dare at once to confide in you, ay, and to place you in a situation which will immediately give you the means of serving your king, your country, and, as I well believe, eventually, yourself. Without further preface, I

Digitized by Google

may tell you that Lord Fairfax is not unwilling to favour the return of the king."

"Is Lord Fairfax for the king?"

"He is, and as it is needful that some one should communicate with him and me, who may be occasionally at York House, his Lordship's present residence, without exciting suspicion from his former connection with the political world, I have thought of engaging you to undertake this part, if you feel sufficient zeal in the cause, to be prepared to act with me, that is, to come in to what the party now in power would not fail to call a plot, and risk your life on its success."

"The oppressive conduct of the present anomalous substitute for a government has dispelled the dreams of my earlier youth. I am not now to be convinced that on the restoration of mo-

Digitized by Google

narchy, the future prosperity of England must depend, and will readily undertake the task you would assign to me."

"Then I shall wish you this very night to leave Hertfordshire. This is sudden, but it is necessary. Preparatory to your going, take this, as money may be wanted on various occasions, which cannot now be specified or exactly anticipated."

A well replenished purse was handed to Albert. He hesitated, but the manner and look of Challoner bore down all opposition, and he received it.

As yet Challoner had made no allusion to the singular spectacle which Albert had witnessed. He wished to speak on this subject, but felt somewhat embarrassed how to introduce it.

"I fear," said Challoner, "your countenance is too ingenuously expressive for the concerns in which you are about to

Digitized by Google

engage. I can see that your thoughts are fixed on what I promised to communicate, relative to the interruption of your rest last night."

Albert felt rather confused at this prompt detection of his thoughts. Challoner continued:

"Few words shall explain what you saw. When all security for property was at an end in this country, those who possessed considerable means were unable to transport their gold and valuables to foreign parts, with themselves. I then determined on burying in the garden of this cottage what remained of my wealth. This prudent step I took before my fortune had been much impaired. Since that period, and indeed for some years before it, I spent little of my substance. The common pleasures of mankind had lost their value in my eyes, and I endured life merely because I thought

Digitized by Google

it would be criminal to relieve myself from it."

"I am sorry you have confided this important secret to me. Such a fact cannot be too carefully concealed. I shall fear lest in sleep it escape from me."

"To you, had your attention not been attracted to my labour when in the silence of midnight I sought my buried treasure—to you, I say, I should have desired to impart the secret, that in the event of my life being brought to an early conclusion, the gold thus preserved might not rest useless."

"I am deeply beholden to your bounty. Now I can understand the care bestowed on *the Mountain Ash.*"

"It was necessary to have some mark to guide me, or any one whom I might find it necessary to trust, as I do you, to the exact spot where the future means of

Digitized by Google

existence were deposited. Obliged to decide hastily, I could devise no better means for protecting my property than by charging the poor man whom I suffered to take up his residence here, with the care of the tree, the failure of which was to cost him the advantages that were to requite his attention. For many a long month the spot has not been disturbed, but circumstances now open a field for exertion!"

Albert had substantial reasons for feeling gratified with this disclosure. The confidence reposed in him, and the advantages offered, might have gladdened a sordid heart. They were not despised by him; but he exulted more in finding that mysterious conduct which he had remarked, thus satisfactorily explained.

His eyes glistened with returning cheerfulness when they chanced to rest

Digitized by Google

upon the rose which had been mentioned by Thorpe, between which and the ash tree he had fancied there was some connection.

Challoner, well read in the human heart, had learnt to look for the expression of its workings from the eye before it could be shaped into speech by the tongue. The glance of surprise, of confusion, or of alarm, he had remarked could outstrip the most sudden exclamation, as the lightning flash does the voice of the thunder.

"Again," said he, "do I detect and follow the course of your thoughts. Either you have been told, or you have observed something of the *rose* which has been preserved not less carefully than the *ash tree*."

"Sir," Albert replied, "with you my thoughts seek not to shun detection. It is most true that I have observed the care

Digitized by Google

bestowed on the flower now in the room. I wish to repress improper curiosity, but must acknowledge what I have just heard has nothing abated my previous impression, that you value this rose not merely for its beauty."

"If, Albert, I have not failed to trace the workings of your mind, you have proved yourself equally competent to discover what my lips have been slow to reveal. There is that connected with this poor flower which will interest and surprise you. That small vessel," he continued, pointing to the case in which the rose-tree flourished, "is a sepulchre."

Albert evinced astonishment at the language, but still more at the manner of Challoner, which, before serious, now became affectingly mournful.

"Yes, boy — so I must call you — this contains not buried gold, but the heart

Digitized by Google

of one who loved you fondly, devotedly, and to death."

More amazed than ever, Albert gazed alternately on Challoner and on the flower so strangely prized — so strangely associated, but was not sufficiently composed to offer an answer, or to frame a question.

Challoner proceeded : —

"In an awful hour of frenzy and of carnage, your aunt, who had bravely undertaken the protection of your helpless infancy, perished. Cruelly deceived myself, I fearfully wronged her, or unquestionably I should have averted or shared her fate. Accident conducted me to the spot where the discoloured remains of her once-lovely form reclined. You, Albert, the tender object of her care, though wounded by the same hand which had destroyed her, still breathed."

Challoner paused, while tears fast mingling with those of Albert, flowed from

Digitized by Google

bitter regret when the dreadful spectacle to which his mind now turned, again lived in his memory. He thus resumed,

"The bosom of the ill-fated beauty had been savagely profaned, and the kind heart its inhabitant, was exposed. To me I was persuaded that it had been false; but my tears fell on it, and I took it from the corpse, resolved to give it burial in consecrated ground. More I could not beyond placing her remains in a shallow pit, which was near, and covering them with the turf, which I wildly snatched from the plain. I carried the heart which I believed to be frail, and the child said to be the offspring of that frailty, many a dreary mile. I am thankful to the Most High that the madness which at times came over me, did not so far subdue my reason as to induce me to

Digitized by Google

leave you, whose very existence I deemed a sin against me, to perish with her whom now I know to have been all that faithful love should prize. My speech I much suspect of very imperfectly embodying what I would say. I doubt if you can comprehend me."

"There is, Sir, for me, a thrilling interest in all you have said. I would ask a hundred questions, but, impatient for your further discourse, will not now interrupt with one enquiry."

"When I reached a neighbourhood in which I could rest for a short space, I procured a case like that which you now look upon, and having filled it with earth from the church-yard, I deposited the heart of Emma in the hallowed dust. That and you were the companions of my subsequent journeyings, till I reached this place. Being here, I planted a rose-tree in the case, and as the flower grew

Digitized by Google

and flourished, I gazed upon its beauty, and contemplated its sweetness with feelings almost approaching to idolatry. My mind adopted it as the living representative of what Emma was, and I have sometimes been so far carried away as to doubt whether the object nourished by her heart had not succeeded to her intelligence. I have spoken to it, and by turns reproached and lamented the imputed frailty which was my undoing, and then I have caressed it with insane joy, and exulted in the restoration of life and innocence to one who slumbers in the grave, but whose weakness, till within these few days, it was impossible for me to doubt."

"I marvel not that such an object should have been greatly prized. Yet, yet, Sir, I would enquire —"

"Not at this moment, Albert, would I have you enquire into matters connected

Digitized by Google

with what I have just touched upon. In a few hours I shall be more composed, and then I will unfold all that you can desire to know. Accident had directed your attention to two objects, with regard to which my conduct might appear strange. On these points, as I knew not what you might imagine, nor even what might be reported thereon, I deemed it prudent at once to speak."

"Trust me, Sir, I would not press for explanations which you may feel it painful to supply, yet must I confess that I feel —"

"Impatient for the promised disclosure. This I neither blame nor wonder at. It shall not be long delayed. But I would at this moment give you some idea of the part which I am desirous that you should act. You need not be told that those doings which have barred the king from his throne, have despoiled his

Digitized by Google

subjects of their rights. I have already made you acquainted with the hope, ay, and the expectation which I cherish, of seeing our troubles speedily terminated, by the re-establishment of the ancient form of government in this kingdom. The king is ready to pardon many who have grievously offended; and not a few of those who have erred are anxious to return to the path of duty. The parties thus affected are known to one Bentley, who will be found where I shall direct you to proceed, some fifteen or sixteen miles from this place. He, in due time, will introduce you to certain persons in London, with whom it will be for you to act at this important crisis."

"I shall be faithful, sir."

"I doubt it not, but you must also be wary. He brings little strength to a cause, who, always meaning well, by imprudence or lack of capacity generally

Digitized by Google

acts ill. But to guard you against the manifold errors into which your inexperience might betray you, I have written very fully those instructions which I deem important for the regulation of your conduct. These you must peruse at your earliest leisure most attentively, and when you have once thoroughly established the essential points in your memory, commit the paper to the flames, that no accident may betray the secret confided to your keeping."

"Fear me not, Sir. My memory is retentive, my industry will be active, and a single night will suffice to put me in full possession of the contents of the papers you mention."

"Use expedition, but avoid precipitation. In the cypher which you will find among the papers now entrusted to your care, you must make yourself perfect. Communicate with me as often as you

Digitized by Google

can; or at least as often as you have aught to impart which may prove in any way important. You, being utterly unknown, can mingle in society, and may with safety be found where it would be death for me to appear. It is these considerations, added to the knowledge of your merit and fidelity, which induce me to confide as I do in one so young. For this I should be blamed were you to miscarry; but my information with respect to your character, on which Thorpe has never failed to report from time to time, lifts me above all apprehension on that score."

Albert expressed his sense of the kindness which manifested itself in the confidence reposed in him. It was finally resolved that he should proceed to Bentley's that night. The remainder of the day was occupied in preparations for his departure. Challoner endeavoured to

Digitized by Google

advertise him of all those points on which it was necessary for him to be particularly guarded. Thorpe was not told of the errand on which Albert was to be despatched, but merely informed that he was about to visit one of his benefactor's friends, with whom it was probable he would reside for some time. In the course of the afternoon Challoner called up sufficient resolution to make Albert acquainted with those events of his early life, which the reader has seen in the preceding chapters. To describe the emotions of Albert at hearing of the melancholy fate of his parents and aunt, would be superfluous. While lamenting their death he deplored the more protracted woes of Challoner. Grief predominated in his mind, but it could not subdue the gratitude which the conduct of his benefactor was in all respects well fitted to inspire.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. VIII.

"And ah! forgive a stranger rude,
A wretch forlorn," she cried.

GOLDSMITH.

ALBERT took leave of Challoner shortly after nightfall. He directed his steps towards the abode of Thorpe, whence he was to depart on horseback. He was about to knock for admittance, when his name was pronounced by a female voice. He looked round, but saw no one. He, again, heard the same voice, which in a tremulous tone doubtingly enquired—

"Is it Albert?"

"I am Albert," was his reply.

"Then tarry, in mercy tarry," cried

Digitized by Google

the female, "and permit me to speak with you."

Albert felt considerable surprise at being thus accosted, and that surprise was little abated by the last sound which reached his ear, and made him know the speaker to be no other than Dame Neville.

"Why are you here?" he asked, "has any one again troubled you?"

"Not since the morning, when I was accused of murder. But I am in hourly fear. Pray you, come further from the house of Master Thorpe, for should he perceive me near his dwelling, he will feel assured that my purpose is evil, and deem all he ever imagined to be amply confirmed."

"In this," said Albert, "I know your fears are but too well-founded. I would fain hope they are not so with respect to any thing else that alarms you."

Digitized by Google

"Alas!" replied the Dame, "my cause for alarm is not like poor Mr. Thorpe's fear of me, without foundation; but, pray you, come further."

Albert complied with Dame Neville's request, and walked to a less frequented part.

"I entreat your forgiveness," she cried; "but in the world I have no friend who will listen to me but Albert. To you I wish to tell the peril of my situation."

"Nay, Dame," said Albert, "I fear your troubles have disturbed your reason. Came not I, but recently, to tell you of your danger, and to advise you to leave this neighbourhood?"

"My memory fails me not, and the instances of benevolence which I have met with, are too few to make it likely that I shall soon forget your humanity,

Digitized by Google

or confound the efforts of your pity with those of any other fellow-creature."

"Then what is it you would say?"

"You have told me, that the great witch-finder is about to come hither; and though warned by you, I have refused to fly, in the hope that on his coming the truth will be made manifest, and suspicion and alarm, with respect to me, for ever set at rest."

"Have you since judged it prudent to alter your determination?"

"No; but I am exposed to a new danger. Not many days since I met a man whose face I could not view without shuddering."

"And why?"

"O! I have seen that horrid villain in my younger days. Then, though in the prime of manhood, his hard features were stamped with an expression

Digitized by Google

which advancing age has not softened, an expression of ferocity so strong, that it seemed—it seemed suited to his habits."

"Of whom do you speak?"

"I wish not to name him. Though justice would demand his blood, I hesitate to be the immediate instrument of shedding it. This man has triumphed in crime, but the sun of his prosperity declines. He knows that I, poor, helpless, feeble as I am, may yet be formidable to him."

"Indeed! then what have you to dread?"

"All that lawless malice can suggest to a cruel mind. Not many days since we met; an involuntary start betrayed my knowledge of him: his fierce eye glanced at mine, and as I retreated to the humble roof beneath which I have sought to shelter myself from the world's

Digitized by Google

curiosity, its anger, and its pity, I saw that he followed."

"You should not have gone straight to your home."

"Nor did I. When I observed him watching my footsteps, I took another direction. But I have reason to believe that if baffled then, he has since been more successful."

"Methinks, Dame, what you now tell, suggests a powerful reason, in addition to what I formerly urged, for quitting this place."

"You already know why I decline to go. Had I thought of it before, the occurrences of this day would have compelled me to relinquish the idea."

"Why so?"

"Accused, as I have been by the general voice, of murder, were I to leave Hertfordshire the moment after my li-

Digitized by Google

beration from those who sought for proofs of guilt, would it not be universally felt that to such a course I had been urged by the consciousness of crime? No, no, I cannot do it. My life may be sacrificed by my remaining, but at least I will not deserve that the obloquy of murder or witchcraft shall attach to my memory from fear to meet those who may seek to put me on trial."

"I wish the result of the ordeal to which you will be subjected, may prove all you can hope, but I fear it. Prejudice is strong, and I am fearful that improper means may be used to give a colour to that charge, unjust as I am satisfied it is, which the neighbours by common consent have brought against you."

"To that peril I trust I shall not be exposed; at least, I may calculate on

Digitized by Google

one generous defender — he who so nobly befriended me this day."

"Nay, Dame," said Albert, "you must not indulge that thought. This night I depart from Redburn and know not how long I shall be absent."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Dame Neville, with some emotion, "and are you—are you going? Whither do you repair?"

"That is a secret."

"Dare you not mention it?"

"I cannot; for at this moment it is unknown to myself."

Then why should I longer remain?" she enquired, speaking to herself rather than to Albert; "why should I stay?" But the considerations which had operated on her mind before seemed on a sudden to recur to her, and she added, with firmness, "No matter, come what may, to think of flight is useless."

Digitized by Google

"Methinks not, if you have any thing to fear from violence."

"That I have much to fear, God knows. It is no groundless tremor that comes over me. Though the vale of age is before me, and I have not those ties which bind the many to existence, and am most willing to yield my breath when heaven may require it, I confess myself terrified by the thought of dying, as the unhappy female whom you saw with me last night did—I weep to think of it,—through me."

"Through you! good heavens, Dame, do you really mean what you say?"

"I do:—through me she died, but not by my contrivance."

"You merely mean to say, that but for her visit to you, she would not have encountered the monster who destroyed her. That may be true, but the same

Digitized by Google

catastrophe would have occurred had she called on any one else at that hour."

"Not so, Albert; you have not fathomed my meaning. I have reasons for believing that had she sought any cot but mine, she would have escaped injury."

"Indeed!"

"It is true. I, destined to be unhappy, was directly the cause of her death,"

"What mean you?"

"That fatal gift which you saw her receive from me—*that* destroyed her!"

"Can it be possible!" exclaimed Albert, breathless with amazement. He recollected the idea which Thorpe had thrown out respecting the awful consequences of wearing a witch's clothes, that, wild as he had deemed it, seemed now to receive confirmation from the lips of Dame Neville,

Digitized by Google

"It was the present of a part of my attire," she continued, "that produced the sad event. He of whom I have spoken, I suspect, though proof I have none to offer, will have at the last day to answer for this murder, and the blow by which the ill-fated rustic perished, was aimed at this lonely, broken heart."

Her speech faltered, and she had nearly sunk to the earth. Albert supported her. Just then some one approached, and he found himself addressed by Robert.

"I'll tell you what, Master Primlook, if you are going to play any of your tricks, you had better go farther off, for my master is just coming this way to look for you at Thorpe's."

Dame Neville revived, but Albert perceived that she trembled violently. He regretted having been seen by Robert,

Digitized by Google

and anxious to remove the idea that he was idling, he replied,

"I shall be home immediately; but here is a female who required assistance."

"No doubt. Females are rather liable to want assistance from gallants of your figure and complexion, which I see you are ready enough to give."

"Spare your coarse jeers. This is not the occasion which ought to call them forth."

"Nay, young gentleman, I only wished to give you a hint. If my master find you with your arm about a woman's waist, and in the dark too, he will perhaps be able to guess as well as I can, the sentimental kind of assistance your benevolence is likely to prompt."

"Prithee, no more, Robert. Do your errand."

"My errand was to tell you to stop a

Digitized by Google

few moments for my master, if you were not already off. Shall I tell him that you are engaged?"

"Tell him, Robert, that you have seen me, and that I will come to him in a few minutes."

"So soon as that!—Very well."

Robert then withdrew.

"I know," said Dame Neville, "you can ill spare the time which I have besought you to devote to me. But I will not detain you longer than to explain my coming hither. I am convinced that the wretch who put that poor woman to death intended to strike me."

"On what is this belief founded?"

"On the mournful knowledge which I have of his former life—on the look which he lately gave me—on his attempts to watch me to my residence. From these and other circumstances, I am satisfied, that, deceived by the dress

Digitized by Google

which the object of my fatal charity wore, he thought the moment had arrived for rendering me mute for ever."

Albert had forgotten that the woman had clothed herself in those articles of apparel which had been given to her. He now remarked :—

"There is, indeed, some probability in this statement. Dressed as she was, the villain might mistake her for you; but if you know him, both for your own sake, and for the sake of justice, you ought to make public what you have just told me."

"To what purpose shall I do so? Though I have the strongest moral conviction on my own mind, that the party of whom I have spoken committed this deed of blood, I have no proof to offer that can, or that ought to weigh with others. Nor do I know where he is to be found. It may be that he has

Digitized by Google

fled. But when he learns that he has failed in his attempt on my life, I doubt not he will return."

"Then why—why not seek some new abode?"

"That may be matter of consideration when I have faced those who are about to become my accusers. But I have come hither now to request you to take charge of this packet; it contains what, should I fall by violence, may one day make the villain tremble. Even from the grave it may be mine to bring on his head the justice of his country."

"Then why not do it now?"

"Now it cannot be done; you will one day know why. The cause of my present intrusion is this:—In consequence of the accusation brought against me to-day, my poor home has been nearly ransacked. The place in which these papers were deposited escaped the

Digitized by Google

search, but I have to fear a still more rigid examination, when the enquiry you have announced shall begin. This may then be lost or destroyed. I would therefore give it to your care; your receiving it may prove the means of saving my life. Should he who seeks to destroy me, know that this is in safe hands, and likely to be opened when I am no more, he will pause before he adds my murder to the crimes which already weigh down his soul, and will become not less anxious for my preservation, than I believe him to be for my death."

"That I cannot understand. If he fears you to that degree that he would seek your life lest you should put his in jeopardy, what more can he dread from the papers you may leave?"

"Ignorant of the existence of what I now give to your custody, he thinks my death would give him perfect security.

Digitized by Google

When he shall learn that this cannot be accomplished by the means he would use, he will defer the execution of his purpose till he has attempted by persuasion or intimidation to induce me to give these to him. Unless that can be effected, he will judge that his own life depends on mine, as he will calculate that though I *can*, it may be doubtful whether I ever *will* come forward against him."

"What you have given to my keeping shall be preserved with religious care," said Albert, receiving the Dame's packet.

"And now," said Dame Neville, "I will not ask you to tarry. Should another deed of blood occur; should I be found as my visitor of last night was, this day, then hold yourself at liberty to examine what I have entreated you to hold for me. In the absence of that

Digitized by Google

event, preserve the seal unbroken till I shall trouble you with a new request."

Albert promised every thing that was required, and fearing Challoner might wonder at his stay, he turned somewhat abruptly from the reputed witch."

"Yet one moment" she cried, seizing his hand, and pressed it to her lips. Albert was affected by her tone and manner, while he felt her tears bathe the hand which she clasped. "You," she added, "when all around were disposed to persecute, have been kind. May the Mighty Searcher of all hearts, who knows how false are the accusations preferred against me, bless, sustain, and watch over you in all your doings. Forget me not, should you see me no more; but if you return while I am yet alive, fail not to speak one word of comfort to the weak, defenceless, calumniated Dame Neville."

Digitized by Google

She sadly retired; Albert would fain have followed, but in that moment he heard Robert accost him once more, to tell that his master, impatient to speak with him, was about to seek Thorpe's house. There was no time for delay, and he hastened to Challoner.

Challoner did not long detain him. Having added what he thought necessary to the instructions and admonitions which he had previously given Albert, bade him adieu. He took leave of the Thorpes, and having carefully deposited the packet given to his custody in a cabinet which belonged to him, he commenced his journey.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. IX.

Thou lingering star with less'ning ray,
That lovest to greet the early morn;
Again thou usher'st in the day.

BURNS.

ALBERT was so well acquainted with the road which he had to travel, that he deemed it no inconvenience to journey at night, but he had not gone far when he found that he had difficulties to encounter, on which he had not calculated. A thick mist obscured the way, which baffled his sight more than common darkness would have done. In the course of the first ten miles, he more than once found himself at particular points, which he believed that he had passed before. At length the fog became so dense, that he could distinguish no object on either

Digitized by Google

side of the road, and though he continued to advance, he doubted whether he was in the track which it had been his purpose to pursue.

He heard the trampling of a horse behind, which, halting and delaying as he had done, seemed to prove that the rider was embarrassed like himself. Though he could hope for little beneficial information from one thus circumstanced, he felt a disposition to accost his fellow-traveller.

With this feeling he halted. The other did the same. Albert then turned his horse to approach the traveller.

He had moved but a few yards when he perceived his neighbour again in motion, and heard himself rather roughly challenged:—

"Halloo! Keep off! Who goes there?"

"A friend," said Albert.

"But what sort of a friend?" de-

Digitized by Google

manded the other. "On this road one sometimes meets with friends who are rather more free than welcome, who scruple not to borrow a purse on the first interview."

"You do well to be on your guard; but I am not of the vocation you suspect. I would only ask if you can tell me at what part of the road we now meet."

"Truly that were no easy task at present. This foggy veil is most deceiving. Darkness conceals, but this misrepresents objects."

"I find it so," Albert replied, "and have frequently believed myself on a vast plain, when, inclining to the right or the left, I have found the road closely bounded by tall trees or houses. But now, for some time, I have looked in vain for any object I could recognise."

"Whither do you want to go?"

Digitized by Google

"I purpose sleeping in the neighbourhood of Southgate to-night."

"Do you so? Nay then I may serve you. My house lies over Enfield chase. I pass near Southgate, and do not think that even the fog will preclude me from finding my way thither; therefore, if so disposed, you can follow me."

Albert thanked the traveller for his civility, and, glad to avail himself of the services of one less bewildered than himself, he followed as invited.

At first they went forward in silence, but by degrees they got into conversation. It was rather inquisitively demanded of Albert, whom he wished to see at Southgate, from what place he came, and why he preferred travelling at that hour?

To such interrogatories Albert gave cautious and evasive answers. He named

Digitized by Google

St. Albans, which he certainly had but lately left, as the place from which he came; at Southgate, he said, he expected to find an inn; and as for the hour, he had not been accustomed to think much of that when business called for exertion.

They went on conversing, but Albert was careful not to let aught escape indicative of a desire to see any individual residing at Southgate. He considered, that as in a village so small, the name of every inhabitant must be known to one moderately acquainted with the place, it might give rise to suspicion if he suffered it to transpire that he wished to seek the dwelling of any private individual at so late a period of the night, and on such a night as that.

The road seemed very long to Albert, and he was still invited to follow his brother traveller, long after he would

Digitized by Google

have concluded from the distance he had rode that he must have reached the place of his destination. He began to suspect that he should profit little from the assistance of his guide, and his apprehensions were confirmed when the latter declared it was utterly out of his power to tell where they were.

Albert was not a little afflicted at hearing this acknowledgment. He however breathed no reproach. He sincerely admitted the difficulty of distinguishing the road intended to be taken; and only regretted that when first bewildered he had not retraced his steps till he reached some object which might have given him the information he wanted.

But the question was, what ought he to do in his then situation. He little liked the idea of remaining where he was till day should return; and if he ventured to move at all he might journey from the

Digitized by Google

point which he wished to approach. His fellow-wanderer professed utter inability to speak with certainty as to the road which would conduct them to Southgate, but he inclined to the opinion that they were in the right track.

Hoping that this conjecture was not erroneous Albert kept on. The other went slower than he had done, but evinced no disposition to change his course. He had now become remarkably taciturn, and spoke not but when compelled by a question from Albert.

They had been several hours in company, and Albert, with infinite vexation, found himself as completely at a loss as if he had been plunged into the deepest mazes of a forest in an unknown land. He began to reflect that if he were to reach Southgate at that period of the night, he might not easily find the party by whom he had been expected at an

Digitized by Google

earlier hour. He judged it was late, and demanded of his companion,

"Know you the time, friend?"

"Not precisely. I only know that it is long after midnight, and I thought the bell struck one a short time ago."

"Can you yet resolve me, if we have fallen into the true path?"

"I have many times thought so, but have presently been again in doubt. Ha! Is it so? I almost distrust my sight! Yes, we are right at last—we are now over the chase, and within a few paces of my dwelling."

"How say you? Are we over Enfield chase? Nay, then, we must have travelled through, or hard by, the place to which I would go."

"It is most true. We have certainly passed by East Barnet."

"This is very unfortunate. But being

Digitized by Google

here, you can now point out the way which I must take."

"That will I do most readily, but your beast and you are weary. This air and damp are little wholesome; wherefore as a wayfaring man you can do no better than alight to rest and refresh yourself, and stable your horse till the morning."

"Nay, Sir, with thanks for the kind offer, I must decline profiting by your hospitality. I would not that it shall be said I wilfully delayed."

"But you shall find at Southgate no resting place meet for one of your condition, (for your speech betokens you to be none of the meaner sort), open to receive you at this hour."

"For that I must take my chance, and hoping for good fortune, brave the worst."

Digitized by Google

"But have you friends in Southgate, to whom you can repair?"

Albert paused for a moment before he replied. The same question in another shape had previously been put to him. He liked not the inquisitive manner of the speaker, and cautiously answered —

"I have no *friends* there."

The emphasis which he unconsciously laid on the word "friends," attracted the notice of his companion, who quickly turned on him with a new question —

"Have you relations there?"

"None," was Albert's response.

"Nay then," the other cried in a blunt friendly way, "you must not go thither at this hour. I pray you alight, and in my house you shall find the supper already spread, and enough for both, I will warrant."

"Take again my thanks, but I would rather at once pass on. Therefore at this

Digitized by Google

time, I will but obtain from your kindness the best direction you can furnish, and bid adieu."

"Verily, to give a direction which shall suffice to carry you through the chaos of this night, is past my capacity. If you must needs be gone, I, having led you thus far from your road, will be your companion."

"That I can in no wise permit. Never think that I will be the cause of taking you from your home, and from those comforts to which I have been so kindly bidden."

"Stand not for fashions. I am no man for ceremony, but it shall not be that you, brought hither by my error, shall now forth alone. For me it may be possible to find the way, but you would not fail to wander all night to no purpose."

Digitized by Google

"I think with your instruction I shall not fail so egregiously."

"You are deceived. Since it must be so, I will at once have with you. My horse is weary, and knows that he is at home, but he shall back so far."

He spoke in a manner which distinctly announced that he would take no denial. Welcome as company might have been, had Albert travelled but on ordinary business, to conduct to the very house, he sought an individual perfectly unknown to him, and whose curiosity had already somewhat startled him, was that which he resolved not to risk, escape it as he might.

"Is it to any inhabitant near *the Weld Chapel*, that you would hie?" his guide enquired, beginning to put his horse into a trot.

This question somewhat staggered Albert, for in the lane leading to the

Digitized by Google

Weld Chapel, had he reached Southgate, he was to have sought Bentley. It almost appeared as if the person in whose company he found himself, had some intelligence respecting his errand.

Albert parried the enquiry, by saying he desired not to call on any person who resided near the Chapel, but he wished to make enquiry after one who lived on the green.

"Then use the spur, and let us forward."

"Nay, tarry," said Albert, "I have heard grave men declare their second thoughts to be better than those which preceded. I know not whether my present ideas are superior to their ancestors, but I much incline to avail myself of the kindness lately proffered. My horse has travelled enough, I am not unwilling to rest, and I will therefore spare you the toil of conducting me to Southgate, by

Digitized by Google

partaking of the good cheer your hospitality would set before me."

"Well considered, young man. In a few hours this obscurity will have fled, and you may travel with comfort. I told you, I was no man to stand for fashions, and had you not decided to accept my invitation, it would not have been repeated. But come, since it is so, we are at home."

While speaking, he approached a wall in which, between two solid brick columns surmounted by globes, Albert saw a gate. His conductor sounded a bell, and the door was opened by a man servant, who took the horses towards a stable to the right of the house, which Albert could but just discern through the gloom which prevailed. They crossed a moderately spacious fore-court, and ascending two or three steps, passed into a hall, where a small lamp was burning.

Digitized by Google

On the left of this, a door opened into a room on the ground floor, in which was a table, on which candles evidently but just lighted were placed, and on which a substantial supper was spread.

"Now sit you down, and eat freely," was the hearty but unceremonious address of the host. "It, however, might be no bad thing, that we should each take one glass of generous wine first. But I do not see that any is here. To this I must look myself."

"Here is a flask," Albert remarked, "which seems to be half full."

"That wine is fit but for an invalid, and would ill agree with your palate or constitution. I shall fit you better anon."

He left the room, and Albert endeavoured to recollect where he had seen the face of his entertainer before. It was not wholly new to him, but he could

Digitized by Google

not determine where he had met the individual in whose home he so unexpectedly found himself.

The wine was brought in; and with a smile on his countenance the master of the house invited his guest to drink. Albert complied, and nothing reluctant, obeyed the directions which were most cordially given to help himself to what the table afforded. He was repeatedly pressed to honour the wine, and he complied with the invitation more than once, but excused himself from answering the call so often as it was made, on the ground of its being necessary for him to proceed on his journey at a very early hour.

"But you will sleep here," said his host; "you will not depart till after sharing in the first meal of the morning,"

"I could wish to be stirring even before day-break."

Digitized by Google

"Nay, your zeal seems to me to merit the reproach of being somewhat extravagant. Did the fate of nations depend upon your movements, you could not be more impatient of needful delay."

"Could the fate of nations be affected by my goings or comings, to me, as an individual, punctuality would not be of more importance than it is now, seeing my all of character, and consequently my all on earth, depends upon the impression which may be made by my diligence, while yet I am young."

"But at least you will repose for a while. A bed is prepared for you."

"Your kindness is great. I will rest for an hour or two, and then depart without disturbing you, if this may be permitted. At a future opportunity, I will return to make my acknowledgments for the solace you have offered."

Digitized by Google

After again offering his services to conduct him to Southgate, which were courteously declined, the proprietor of the mansion insisted on their taking a parting draught, and having, at the request of Albert, instructed him in the way which he had to journey, they separated. Albert was shown to a bed-chamber. The apartment was large, and the furniture old-fashioned, but every thing that was necessary for his comfort had been provided. He examined the closets, of which there were two in the room to ascertain that they concealed no one. Blushing for the suspicion which he had momentarily indulged, and which nothing that he had seen could justify, he was in no humour to continue his researches, or to indulge in idle speculation on the character or situation of his late guide. He wished to master the contents of the papers of which he was the

Digitized by Google

bearer, and opened them for the purpose of reading, but his wearied eyes refused to perform the task. He again put them up; and, throwing himself on the bed, in a few moments anxiety was lost in sleep.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. X.

On the suspension of plays at the commencement of the civil wars, and during the whole of the usurpation, the *Red Bull* appears to have been the only licensed theatre. The drama was strictly prohibited, but a mixed species of amusement, consisting of feats of activity and select scenes from plays, under the name of Drolls, was allowed to be here shown to the public. *Londini Illustrata.*

He laughs at what he likes, and then will rise
And take tobacco. *Guls Hornebook.*

I am one of your gentle auditors, that am come in; I have my three sorts of tobacco in my pocket; my light by me. B. Jonson.

James had flattered himself that it would have been in his power to carry more encouraging tidings to Lesley, than had resulted from his interview with the widow Lee. Though he did not think the case hopeless, he could not boast of

Digitized by Google

having accomplished any thing. He was vexed to find that Lilly could not accompany him to Hertfordshire, till the next day. But his old friends, the players, were in motion, and intended to exhibit that afternoon, and to witness their doings would in no small degree console him for the delay.

He accordingly directed his steps to *Red Bull Yard*, which was the name given to a small turning out of St. John's Street, now distinguished as Woodbridge Street. It was here that the votaries of pleasure resorted at that period in great numbers, to enjoy so much of the drama as was permitted to amuse the populace. The long-continued scarcity of theatrical amusements had given the multitude a lively relish for every thing connected with the stage, which was heightened by the fiery zeal still on the alert to detect

Digitized by Google

and put down all scenic representations. Sir William Davenant attempted to steal a march on the Puritans, and had ventured to give a sort of picturial exhibition, "interspersed with recitations," in Aldersgate Street. These recitations, however, were too dramatic to escape the notice of the higher powers, and "a course was presently instituted" to check such fearful impiety.

At the *Red Bull* a different expedient was hit upon to avoid giving offence to the government. Rope-dancing and such other amusements were announced as it had been customary to tolerate, and these it was well understood would give way, before the spectators were dismissed, for a specimen of the dearly-loved and prohibited, and the more loved because prohibited, drama.

James was here at home. He was often

Digitized by Google

numbered among the most efficient members of the corps, but on this occasion, as the only character which he would have been content to act, that of *Simpleton the Smith*, in the droll of that name, was given to Bob Cox, who was then as much distinguished for comic humour, and in as high favour, as Knell and Tarleton had formerly been, the young amateur attended but as a spectator.

Known to every one, he made his way to the tiring room to witness the progress of the preparations; he promenaded the stage with the director-general, and assisted in fixing the apparatus which held up the rope on which two performers of eminence were to display their accomplishments. Then he chatted with those favoured frequenters of the Red Bull who occupied the *rooms*, or boxes, fitted up for the reception of the chief patrons of the players, at the back of the

Digitized by Google

stage, fronting the great body of the audience. It was not the custom for places to be taken beforehand in this, the best, or at least the most expensive, part of the house. Those who desired to occupy it were obliged to go we must not say some time before the curtain rose, as the phrase is at present, but before the curtains opened, for it was by drawing them right and left that the stage was exposed to the *under-standers*, those who occupied that part of the house which might have been formed into a pit, but which was then left unfurnished with seats, like the circle of a modern amphitheatre, and the gallery. It was in the standing place that the œconomist formerly took his station, to see, "A play for two-pence and a jig to boot." But, from the risk and difficulty attendant on these undertakings, sixpence was at this period the price. A shilling was required for admission to the

Digitized by Google

gallery; but those who went to the *rooms* gave no less than two shillings.

"I wish these varlets would bear a hand," cried one, half addressing himself to James, and to his brethren, who were preparing for the performance.

"Why, what's the matter, Master Cocky?" James demanded, (it was to Cox that he spoke,) "you look rather mifty. And what may be that patch on your nose which is now brought in aid of the natural comeliness of your person?"

"That is to cover a scratch which I got from a *tile*, one of the understanders was so courteous as to send at our curtains the day before yesterday, because we were slow in removing them; and I am in expectation of a similar compliment presently, if these fellows creep about so."

"I suspect Bobby, though the folks here may be as liberal of "tile and pear"

Digitized by Google

as ever they were at The Fortune, that your impatience for the droll is not so much on account of your nose, as from the regard you have for your mouth."

"I have no fancy that either should be touched."

"O but you have though. You want your mouth to be touched with the bread and butter which comes out of the stock for *Young Simpleton*. Truly, seeing how the trade of a player is now reduced, I marvel not that 'a bird of the tiring room,' should be a little eager to secure his bread and butter wherever it may offer."

"Marry, I know not how soon it may come to that, for I cannot see as some say they can, that the cause of the stage must yet prevail. True it is, that large prices are paid, but thus the very enormity of those charges prevents people from coming as they otherwise might,

Digitized by Google

while the practice of playing by candle-light, besides making it impossible for good acting to be well seen and duly understood, leads aged people to set their faces against acting, by reason that being kept from home till late of the night incommodes them, and leads young people, so they say, into unmeet contracts."

"And yet I would wager a *rose rial*, that as much mischief was done when plays began at one o'clock, as now."

"That may be; but still this furnishes an argument which is used against us. For now, seeing that we but rarely begin so early as five, the stoppage which is caused while the lights are being set up makes it often after eight before we can conclude. This, many who liked to encourage plays in the time of the king consider very abominable."

Here, an egg, which was then considered a perfectly allowable and le-

Digitized by Google

gitimate play-house missile, was thrown with such force and precision through the parting of the curtains, that it passed over James and, went fairly into the room, or box, at the back of the stage, where it encountered the pipe of a young fashionable, who was smoking, and distributed its yolk over the mask of the elegantly dressed lady sitting next to him. The gallant was so disordered by the shock which his teeth received from the rude contact into which they had been brought with his pipe, that he was too much occupied with re-adjusting himself to attend to his fair companion. James offered to take the mask from the lady, and procure her a new one. This, however, was declined. The offer was pressed, but the refusal was persevered in. James then proposed to take the mask which had been soiled and get it dried. But this also was refused; and, beyond ap-

Digitized by Google

plying his handkerchief to it, he could render no acceptable service.

"I thought there would be some mischief done," cried Cox; "this is always the way of beginning so late."

"Let me tell you, neighbour Cocky," said James, as he peeped between the curtains, "you have got no bad attendance here. It proves that there is some merit at the Red Bull. I don't mean to say who owns the greater share of it, yourself or the other favourite comedian."

"Do you mean Green?"

"No;—the monkey."

"Why, to say truth, I believe he is not without his followers; I do not mean to say you are one of them, but you know 'Birds of a feather—'"

"'Will flock together'—To be sure, I know that, and, of course, am not surprised at finding Bob Cox and the South-

Digitized by Google

wark monkey brother actors at the Red Bull."

But now the crowd in the gallery, as well as the occupants of other parts of the edifice, began to manifest great impatience for the beginning of the entertainments. The whistle of the manager gave notice for the stage to be strewed with rushes, preparatory to its being cleared. The dashing young blood, whose pipe had been assailed in the manner already described, caring not to expose himself to another such visitation retired. James determined on taking his seat. But as a preliminary to this, in order to satisfy the female he was about to approach that it was a person of genteel habits who aspired to become her neighbour, he called to the boy who attended for that purpose, to bring him some tobacco: the demand was made in a well-known quotation.

"'A pipe, there, sirrah; no sophisti-

Digitized by Google

cate; villaine, the best, whate'er you prize it at.'" He added, still quoting from the same author, "'Tell yonder lady, with the yellow fan, I shall be proud to sit by her anon.'" Lighting his pipe by a match, which was always ready in that elegant part of the house, he took his place by the masked lady, and began to consider what topic he could start for the purpose of drawing her into conversation. He had not come to a decision on this point, when the musicians entered their balcony, which was over the right side of the stage, and the first sounding was given by the *trumpets*, to announce that the exhibition was about to open. A second was given, and violins recorders, lutes, and hautboys, combined to furnish the third. The multitude cheered the well-known signal with boisterous glee. Silence immediately followed, and the curtains were quickly

Digitized by Google

withdrawn, so as to display the whole stage.

Then came forward, amidst the tumultuous shouts of the spectators, a rope-dancer, called the *Funamble Turk*. He was dressed in Oriental costume, and was certainly very eminent in his way. He walked barefooted up a sloping rope to the high horizontal one on which the principal exertion was to take place. Having gained it, he passed nimbly along, and delighted the spectators with his extreme agility while dancing, first with, and then without, a balancing-pole. To this part of the exhibition succeeded a series of experiments, such as the venturous professors of our day have not thought of attempting for the amusement of their admirers. A bandage was tied over his eyes, and he continued his evolutions blindfold. A boy of about ten years of age was next brought on, with a

Digitized by Google

strong belt of leather round his waist. The performer sat down on the rope, extending one leg downward as far as he could. A line, which was attached to the bandage round the boy, was then tied to the foot of the leg so extended, and this being done, the *Turk* gradually raised himself, and lifted the boy from the ground. The plaudits of the astonished crowd were renewed, and the effect was not a little heightened when they beheld this singularly-gifted personage, still blindfolded, dancing on the rope with as much agility and grace, thus encumbered, as he could have exhibited on the floor of the stage. The urchin beneath seemed to enjoy the peculiarity of his situation, and very mirthfully dangled as the dancer kept on, evidently taking to himself no small share of the acclamations which were bestowed on his principal. He was released, and the eyes of the

Digitized by Google

Turk were again visible. After a few more feats on the rope, he clambered up what was called a *mast*, at least ten feet above the rope, which was itself no inconsiderable height from the ground, and on the extreme point of the *mast* he placed his head, and remained for some seconds with his feet extended upwards. He quitted this dangerous elevation, passed along the high rope, and finished by sliding down the slope on his breast, his head foremost, and his arms outspread.

The interlude, or "droll," as it was called, of "Simpleton the Smith," succeeded, and in this Bob Cox, the Liston of his day, delighted the gaping multitude with all the eccentricity of affected simplicity and ludicrous contortion. His natural mode of eating bread and butter was deemed a *chef-d'œuvre*, and in proof of his excellence in this, it was recounted as a very remarkable fact, that Jack

Digitized by Google

Adams, of Clerkenwell, from Cox seeming to enjoy it, had been unable to refrain from demanding a share, and had actually bawled out "Buz, buz, give me some." On this occasion Cox, as the all-devouring Vulcan, for *Simpleton, the junior Smith*, had a great talent for eating, was honoured with his customary greeting. His complaints, on being rated by his father for taking "a bit of an afternoon luncheon," diverted; but when the senior, speaking of his growing old, received the dutiful reply from his offspring, "More is the pity that you were not hanged in your youth," the applause was excessive. In this the lady, whose mask had suffered, joined so heartily, that James, though previously unable to break through her reserve, began to conceive hopes of becoming better acquainted with her. He ventured to take an opportunity of untying her

Digitized by Google

mask behind. That, however, did not enable him to accomplish his object, though the lady was too much occupied with the *droll* to notice what he had done. Resolved to be private, she had taken the precaution of using both the fastenings which were then in use with the wearers of masks, either of which was in most cases deemed quite sufficient. Besides the strings which tied behind, her mask was provided on the inside with a small bead, which, received into the mouth, held the covering of the face so close, that though the other means of holding it on had failed, her countenance was as perfectly concealed as ever. *The young Smith* now proceeded to serenade *Doll*, a saucy wench whom the father wished him to marry. His song, which was quite as remarkable for its humour as its modesty, convulsed the masked lady. It supposed a conversation between a

Digitized by Google

mother and her daughter, in which the latter, applying for a husband, described her hopes and expectations, and the burden "*With a toitre loitre, loitre lurry,*" conveyed a meaning to the audience which they very much enjoyed, and the lady by whom James had seated himself was even more delighted with it than her neighbours. But when the gentle *Doll*, personated by a sturdy young man, requited the vocal effort of *Simpleton* by a jug-full of water from her chamber window, the mirth-loving female in the mask was completely overcome by the resistless drollery of the incident, and her laughter caused an awkward accident. The merry expansion of her mouth was so long continued, that the bead of her mask slipped away beyond recovery, and the mask itself fell, when James, with no little surprise, perceived that his gay companion was the broken-hearted mourner

Digitized by Google

he had lately sought to comfort.—the *widow Lee.*

She blushed and felt that there was something in her present situation which was a little at variance with the tumultuous sorrows of which James had so recently been the witness. He, however, (feeling that his own conduct had not been exactly that of the grave astrologer), was very indulgent, and after a brief comment on the folly of indulging grief, and the propriety of endeavouring to chase it by amusement, joined with her to laugh at the loves of *Simpleton* and *Doll.* When these terminated, a strong man exhibited, and received the approbation of the multitude for taking up a piece of a cannon, said to weigh *four hundred pounds*, with the hair of his head.

The players were about to act some scenes from the "Midsummer Night's Dream," under the title of "Bottom

Digitized by Google

the Weaver," when a cry of "*Red Coat, Roundhead*—Turk, Turk!" resounded through the building. These cries intimated that soldiers were at hand, and that it might be necessary to recur to the tight-rope exhibition. The hint was promptly taken, and not *the Turk* but the *monkey* of whom James had spoken, and who had greatly distinguished himself at St. Margaret's Fair, Southwark, made his appearance. The animal was fantastically dressed in a blue doublet, and wore a hat with a tall feather in it. This he took off, and bowed to the spectators. He danced on the rope, imitating many of the actions of *the Turk*. A basket containing eggs was handed to him, and he turned heels over head with it, without breaking any of them. Then he passed to the slack rope, on which he exhibited in full swing, balancing a lighted candle, and

Digitized by Google

a cup of water on his head, in succession, without extinguishing the one, or spilling any portion of the contents of the other.

The alarm which had been given proved unfounded, and "Bottom the Weaver" was acted without experiencing any interruption, but from laughter and applause. The widow, though her mirth was moderated by the reflection that she had been recognised, was evidently much amused, and when the audience were dismissed, she offered James a seat in her hackney coach, and invited him to Lambeth. She travelled by coach for the purpose of being private. On the way she explained the necessity she had been under of seeking for something to divert her thoughts from the mournful death of the late Mr. Lee. James very much approved of the prudent resolve which took her to the *Red*

Digitized by Google

Bull, and merrily supped with the mourner. Finally, he took his leave, convinced that though the widow's affliction was as sincere, and as deeply rooted as that of many ladies whose husbands have deceased, that Lesley might now consider matters had been brought into a very comfortable train, and put the important question floating in his mind, without risk of seeing Mrs. Lee expire from excessive sensibility at the sound.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. XI.

He must be gone, the stars had so decreed,
As he of them, so they of him had need;
This message 'twas the blazing comet brought,
I saw the pale-faced star, and seeing thought,
For we could *guess*, but only Lilly *knew*.

Elegy on the Death of Lilly.

When Albert left Challoner, it had been agreed that he should write the next day to tell of his reception. The conveyance by which the letter was to go, had been pointed out, but of this from unlooked-for circumstances which have already been partly explained, he was unable to avail himself. Several days passed without bringing the expected information. Accustomed to disappointment and mishap, Challoner began to fear that some accident had occurred,

Digitized by Google

though he was not a little at a loss to imagine what could have happened thus early, to cause that breach of punctuality which annoyed, and in some measure alarmed him.

But if the desired intelligence was kept back longer than it might have been, when, at length, it arrived, he was more than consoled for the delay. He received news of the safe arrival of Albert, too late to communicate with him in the way proposed, and excessive caution, an error perhaps, but one on the right side, had preferred suffering some days to elapse before any tidings were forwarded, to trusting even the most trifling paper to an unknown hand. Challoner applauded the prudence which had given him pain. He also learned from the same papers that Albert was not a little flattered by the kindness which he had experienced, and the con-

Digitized by Google

fidence which had been reposed in him; while from Bentley he was assured, that nothing could promise better for the cause than the zeal, alacrity, and address displayed by the new auxiliary, associated with the friends of royalty.

Successive communications were filled with the praises of his protegé; and Challoner looked confidently forward to the moment when the object of his care, the beloved nephew of the lost Emma, should be honoured by the approving voice of his king, and raised to the level of the proudest subject in the land.

Thus several weeks passed away. He had frequent letters, and all furnished him with circumstances which were satisfactory and consoling in their character. There were but two sources of hope for Challoner, the restoration of the king, and the advancement of Albert; and

Digitized by Google

these combined at the same moment to cheer the heart which had pined in lonely sorrow. Nothing could make him gay, but he felt more tranquil than he had been since the disclosure made by the dying Lady Maitland.

Living in the same place with his old friend Thorpe, Challoner frequently saw that unfortunate person, whose ills, real or imaginary, or both, remained faithful to his person. No reasoning could satisfy him that his effigy was not still roasting at what he never failed to denominate "the hell-kindled fire," and his mind was only soothed by the prospect of seeing Matthew Hopkins, whose arrival he had for many days expected.

At last he came. The evening on which Hopkins made his appearance was one of great satisfaction to Thorpe; and the more so, as the witch-finder, on catechising him as to the progress of his

Digitized by Google

tortures, was quite convinced that he had not been brought into Hertfordshire for nothing. They promptly agreed to apply to the magistrates for their sanction to bring Dame Neville to the test of that ordeal which would remove all doubt of her guilt or innocence.

Fatigued with his journey, Hopkins went to bed early. Thorpe was preparing to do the same, when a well-known step and voice were heard at his door, and his son James presented himself. Thorpe was rather surprised at finding him attended by two companions, who serenely walked in with an air which spoke them well disposed to consider themselves at home.

The old man stared, and the young one, with much earnestness, hastened to describe the quality of his first companion, who was no other than Mr. astrologer Lilly. He had less to say on

Digitized by Google

the merits of his second follower, Green the player, who, in consequence of the strict measures adopted against theatrical representations, found himself quite at leisure for any country excursion, which promised to take a little idle time off his hands — off his mouth might be added; for, remaining in London, he had no reason to fear that any severe toil would be imposed upon his teeth in the way of eating.

James had anticipated that Lilly would be most cordially welcomed by his father, but in this he was somewhat disappointed. The previous arrival of *The Witch-Finder-General* made the old gentleman rather shy of conversing with the astrologer, lest by so doing he should give offence to Hopkins, who, mistaking himself for a personage of vast importance, would be likely, so Thorpe feared, to walk off in dudgeon, and refuse to under-

Digitized by Google

take the case at all, if the aid of any other physician should appear to have been solicited.

The presence of Lilly had, however, already in a great measure answered the purpose of James. Certain delays which had taken place he accounted for by speaking of the efforts he had made to discover the place where the great astrologer sojourned, and having thus got over the first meeting with his father, he cared little for the rest, or what might become of William Lilly.

The father withdrew for the night, and while supper was preparing, James, Lilly, and Green sat down to pass away the time with a tankard of ale.

Lilly, anxious to make a display, was ruffled at the sudden exit of Thorpe. But the wife kept her ground, and was full of the sufferings experienced by her lord from the arts of the witch and her

Digitized by Google

assistant devils. This soon afforded Lilly an opportunity of showing some of his knowledge.

"Nay, my good true woman," said he, "methinks you must be scantily supplied with skilful men in these parts, if these things can be."

"That is what I say," cried the lady. "Is it not a shame," she added, with a great deal of fine energy, "that the poor helpless creatures — magistrates they call themselves, have not put a stop to such doings before, instead of sitting still as they have done?"

"What! they have not —"

Lilly had uttered so much of what he intended should be a question, when Mrs. Thorpe proceeded.

"Is it not dreadful that this wretch, and the devils, her servants of all work, should go on just as they please, without let or hindrance? Is it not horrible?"—

Digitized by Google

Lilly found that Mrs. Thorpe was as expert at interrogatories as himself, and that if he waited till he could question with his usual solemnity and pompous pausing, he stood a fair chance of losing his turn altogether. He therefore made a great exertion of voice, and proceeded to business at once.

"It is shocking, as you say, that this should continue, and the more so as devils can be bound with such very little trouble at the right times. *Amaymon*, king of the east; *Gorson*, king of the south; *Zimmimar*, king of the north, and prince of the west; this last, as perhaps you know, is an ugly devil, may all be bound from the ninth hour till evening, and by prayer and other means from evening till cock-crow. *Marquises* may be bound from the ninth hour, till compline; and from compline, till the end of the day; and *Dukes*, the weather

Digitized by Google

being favourable, may be bound from the first hour till noon."

The intimate and extensive knowledge of devils thus displayed, had the effect of checking the volubility of Mrs. Thorpe, whose mouth remained open with astonishment.

"*Prelates*," continued the learned Lilly, "may be bound at any hour of the day. *Knights* from even song till sunrise. *A President* may be bound at all times of the day, except the *King* whom he obeyeth be invocated; and *Counts* or *Earls* at any period, in woods or fields."

"Well!" exclaimed the lady, with great admiration of the profound learning thus displayed, "if such be the case, is it not most negligent of the people here not to have called in the aid of some gentleman of your vast knowledge?"

"Nay, mother," cried James, "it might be necessary to find him first.

Digitized by Google

There are not two Master Lillys in England."

Lilly was too eager to justify the admiration of Mrs. Thorpe to feel other than impatient of interruption, even though to compliment.

"I suppose," said he, "you know how to compel evil spirits to avoid your house?"

"Why, Sir, we have found the *horse-shoe* at the threshold of great use."

"The horse-shoe!" Lilly repeated, with an expression of incredulity, bordering on contempt; which, however, he soon modified out of respect for the party to whom his speech was directed. "I, madam, can give you what I believe you will find more effectual than all the horse-shoes in England."

"Indeed, Sir!"

"Yes, you shall be provided with the Paracelsian charm."

Digitized by Google

"And what is that, pray, Sir?"

"This it is. Having procured a fair piece of virgin parchment, write thereon, not in the vulgar tongue, mind me; but in Latin, one verse from the sixty-fourth, and one from the hundred and fiftieth Psalm. The first you shall find run thus: "*Exurgat Deus et dissipentur inimici ejus.*" The second, "*Omnis Spiritus laudet Dominum.*" Add to these from the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke, these words: "*Moses habent et prophetas.*"

"And will writing these be sufficient?"

"No, my good madam, not merely the writing of them, but when written on the Lord's day fasting, and four copies of the same being prepared, hang you one over each corner of your house, and no spirit shall haunt you more, so long as these remain in their places."

"Why," said James, "that is not the

Digitized by Google

same charm of which you told me before, when we talked on this subject. There were no Psalm texts in that. Have you since found out that devils are fond of reading?"

"You refer to quite a different thing. What I then spoke of was not to drive away devils or evil spirits, but the ghosts of deceased persons; who, in families where there have been many deaths, are sometimes very frequent, and most unwelcome visitors. To accomplish that, you take the wool which has grown between the eyes of a black sheep, burn it to powder, and steep it a night and a day in rain water, caught on a Good Friday. Mix with this, powder of night shade, or *Wake-robin*, and boil them in a quarter of a pint of *Aqua Vitæ*, then sprinkle the walls of your chamber, beginning with the easternmost."

Struck with astonishment that beneath

Digitized by Google

her roof a sage should be found so competent to rule the invisible world, Mrs. Thorpe soon withdrew to impart the wonderful news to her husband. Lilly went on with great self-complacency, setting up his own character for superior skill in occult matters, and reciting many recipes, which the folly of the times had caused to obtain among certain pretenders to science a high reputation, in divers cases where magical agency had been courted. One of these which he held to be the most valuable, taught the holder how to make himself invisible. This the astrologer gave out with great pomp, and was so much taken up with his own performance, that he observed not the whispers and winks interchanged by James and Green, who were laughing very heartily at his solemnity, while he explained how a candle made of virgin wax was to be taken

Digitized by Google

into a parlour, in which no human foot had trod for nine days, then to take clean water from a stream which ran towards the east, and place it on a charcoal fire, at the same time repeating, the candle being held in the right hand, the names *Panthon, Craton, Muriton, Bisecognaton, Siston, Diaton, Tetagrammaton, Agia, Tigra, &c. &c.* He proceeded to recite the invocation necessary to be made, calling on the three virgins *Milia, Achylia, Sibilia,* in the name of all the angels and archangels, to appear in the form of women, in white vestures, bringing with them the ring of invisibility.

"And pray," demanded James, "did you ever make yourself or any one else invisible?"

Lilly admitted that he had not, but added the recipe had come to him so well authenticated, that he could not doubt of its sufficiency. He had once

Digitized by Google

made the experiment, certainly without success, but this, though not accounted for at the time, was fully explained afterwards; as a woman had entered the room, which ought to have been kept clear for nine days before, to see if all was right on the morning of the day on which the trial was made. This it was which had caused the invocation to the three virgins to pass unattended to."

"Indeed!" cried James, affecting a look of ineffable admiration, immediately succeeded by a leer at Green, which the latter understood as a hint to him to prepare for acting his part in a prank which these worthies had concerted, while the last oration was going on.

"No other cause," said Lilly, could have prevented the invocation from being duly attended to by the virgins."

"I dare say," James replied, "virgins are generally pretty well disposed

Digitized by Google

to attend to those who address them in earnest. But, Mr. Lilly, this, though a most extraordinary secret, does not seem to be so eminently valuable as that which you indubitably possess of being enabled to read the future, which you must find of great service every day."

"That, with due regard to veracity, I cannot deny. There are astrologers of good repute, who are not a little honoured every year at *Painters' Hall*, where the fraternity hold their annual feast, who, generally well skilled in honorary matters, can nothing foresee that shall befall themselves. Now, I have always known before hand every thing that was likely to happen to me."

"That must have stood you in great stead in the late troubles."

"Truly it did in many cases; not that I mean to say all that actually occurred was foreseen."

Digitized by Google

"How do you account for that?"

"Very easily. The planets which govern events do not manifest every occurrence before it comes to pass as minutely as it is set forth in '*The Mercurius Politicus*,' afterwards. They but point out the general tendencies of occult nature — the preliminary movements, showing the predisposing cause of which effects are to be the offspring."

"O! I understand. You mean then to say, that the offspring of some causes never makes its appearance; that, in fact, some causes produce no effects, as some people who are married never have a baby."

"This I mean, that the machinery of a clock gives just reason to expect that by noon the hand shall point to Twelve. But some irregular force might, by that hour, push it forward, in despite of the machinery, to One, or to Two. So the

Digitized by Google

progress of nature's march may be anticipated or retarded, by unlooked-for commotions."

"But that is not frequently the case."

"It can rarely happen with those who are not over-forward with predictions, and who, deciding before matters are ripe, by affecting too much cunning, prove their ignorance and folly. Waiting till the proper season, astrology cannot fail. I foretold the present wet weather."

"Was not that difficult?"

"Nothing more easy, *Saturn* being in his *perigee*, and as near the earth as he could be, and then meeting with a conjunction of *Mars* in the sign *Gemini*, near many fixed stars of a contrary nature, plainly told what was to come."

"You knew there would be a fall of water presently."

Digitized by Google

"As surely as I know that I am to rest here to-night."

"So well as that, hey!"

"Just the same. With like certainty, in the year 47, I predicted what was to befal the king. When I saw the distempered position of Heaven — the *double bodies culminating*, and ascending five planets in opposition to each other, this fatal appearance being near the full of the moon, as if the planets and stars of Heaven, and the angry *tutelary angels* of the kingdom were swelled with horror; it was then, to my simple judgment, quite clear to all *qui per stellas judicare volunt*, from the slow motion of the *aphelion of Saturn*, that the king and his friends, personated by the *tenth and eleventh houses*, should go on with great dullness, and so be overtaken in the end."

"That was quite right, and pursuant

Digitized by Google

to your prophecy, which, I believe, was published as early as the year fifty, the king had his beard taken off with his head in forty-eight."

"It was so; but, mind, my prediction was made before it was published."

"Yes, I know it, that was the remarkable part of the business. Some supposed it must have been published first and made afterwards. But, pray, friend Lilly, could you not as we sit here, give me just a sketch of the future destiny of this fellow, Green? you need not be nice as to a sessions or two; but can you make known the number of floggings, burnings in the hand, pilloryings, nose slittings, and other little matters which he may look forward to enjoy?"

"You would be waggish; but you remember not my motto, which is, that those who read the stars ought not to

Digitized by Google

give judgment ' *in parvis, sed in magnis rebus.*' "

" I comprehend you. You mean, you deem it right to apply to the planets in the case of a great man, but that for this petty larceny rascal, you think his sentence is inscribed in sufficiently legible characters on his face, if that burlesque assemblage of eyes, nose, lips, and beard, may be described by a word which is used when speaking of a human countenance."

" Marry, methinks, Master James, you grow somewhat scurrilous."

" For which," cried Green, affecting great rage, " were he not in his father's house, this hand of mine should knock him down."

" Not so; you would not do that for your sister's sake."

" How!" cried Green, starting up with sudden indignation, which it had

Digitized by Google

been previously agreed he should act on this occasion, "do you dare to insinuate anything against my sister?"

"Against her! no — quite the contrary. Your sister — Master Lilly will hardly credit it when he looks at you — is a pretty girl, and as good-natured as she is pretty, and a man would kiss her who would faint away at a glimpse of you."

"As to my sister being good-natured —"

"Well," said James, "I did not mean to hurt your feelings by hinting that she was likely to impair the fortunes of your family by making herself too cheap. She made me pay for her smiles, and —"

"Nay, say no more," cried Lilly, who, moved by the seeming wrath of the parties, had now risen to act the pacificator.

"Get you out of the way," Master

Digitized by Google

Lilly, bawled Green, at the same time taking care to place the astrologer between himself and James. "I'll not be kept from him," he added, making a blow, as he pretended, at James, but which, as he designed it should, fell on the shoulder of the mediator.

"Here's a fuss," cried James, "as if Suke Green's reputation could be wounded by any tongue. Nay, if fighting is to your taste, you shall not be denied," and with these words he made a blow, which the astrologer warded off with his hand, so that it only encountered his ribs with moderate force.

Lilly considered matters to have taken a very serious turn.

"My masters, my masters," he entreated, "be calm."

"Calm!" vociferated Green; "if my sister were disposed to be gay, she would at least look above such a beardless

Digitized by Google

whipster as that;" and these words were followed by another blow made, as it appeared, at James, but which gave Lilly a box on the ear.

"If I am no match for your sister, you will find me more than a match for you," was the reply of James, and a furious attack followed, in which he scarcely touched Green, while Lilly got soundly cuffed, first by one, and then by the other, and sometimes by both at the same moment.

The noise this occasioned brought Mrs. Thorpe and a female servant into the room, and the mock combat instantly ceased. One of the confederates had struck Lilly rather harder on the nose than was intended, and it bled copiously. This, and the general disorder of his appearance, and of the room, called forth a very pathetic "Oh!" from the lady of the house. Lilly lost

Digitized by Google

no time in explaining that a slight misunderstanding had arisen, which he had happily terminated. To prove this, he required the parties to shake hands, which, with some show of reluctance, they did. Water was brought, and the astrologer having washed away the bloody marks of the combat, sat down to supper with James and Green, taking great credit to himself for having prevented mischief, for he had not the remotest idea of the parties having accomplished their real object, which was that of proving his penetration, and thumping him into the bargain.

But his patience was put to a further proof. Mrs. Thorpe made known that her lord deeming no practitioner equal to Matthew Hopkins, was resolved to be governed wholly by his counsel.

"He will only be governed by the counsel of Matt. Hopkins, will he?"

Digitized by Google

cried Lilly, half-closing his eyes, and scowling with all the gravity of angry disappointment, "why, then I tell you what, he must take the consequences."

Mrs. Thorpe hoped that the astrologer would not be offended at the preference, the blame of which she threw upon Hopkins, who, when she spoke of the wonders she had heard, was consulted in his bed, by her husband, and had been pleased to hint that the astrologer himelf was suspected of practices like those which it appeared to Thorpe so necessary to put down.

"Nay, mother," said James, "Master Lilly is no wizard, and I am sure he will have no objection to give proof of this; and you may therefore send word to Mr. Hopkins, that Mr. Lilly has no objection to the usual course of experiments being made on his person, and we will

Digitized by Google

accordingly commence by swimming him as soon as it is day-light in the morning."

This proposition was not over agreeable to the astrologer; no conjunction in the planets had warned him of such a trial. However reluctant to submit to it, he feared at once to refuse; but he shortly afterwards recollected that, in his haste to come to Redburn, he had forgotten to leave in London the cast of a nativity which he had prepared for that worthy gentleman, Sir Bulstrode Whitlock, which, seeing he was not wanted by Mr. Thorpe, he desired much to forward on the following morning. That he might not fail in this, he resolved to mount his horse forthwith. James, who, from the unexpected presence of Hopkins, and one who accompanied him as an assistant, was fearful that no beds would remain for him and Green, was

Digitized by Google

not displeased at hearing this. Laughing heartily to himself at having frightened the astrologer out of the way; he expressed great regret for the circumstance which compelled him to depart, and being sure that the offer would not be accepted, offered to go to London himself with the paper, which it was so important should be delivered without delay. Lilly would not be out-done in generosity on this occasion. He declared the error to have been his, and he was therefore resolved that no one should suffer for it but himself. The struggle terminated in the astrologer being helped on his horse by his friend, who failed not to remind him that it would be well for his reputation that he should hasten back to submit to the watery ordeal, while Mr. Matthew Hopkins remained in Hertfordshire. Lilly being now fairly fixed in the saddle, valiantly answered

Digitized by Google

that he should be willing to do so whenever it might seem necessary, meaning thereby whenever it should be impossible to avoid it, and resolved not to see Redburn again, while Hopkins and ducking were so popular, he spurred on his horse towards St. Albans, leaving James and Green convulsed with mirth at the great knowledge of the future which had been displayed by Lilly, especially when he pronounced that he was to rest there that night.

Nothing remained for them but to retire to bed, from which they proposed to rise betimes in the morning, to witness the proceedings of "the Witch-finder General," against the devoted Dame Neville.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. XII.

But now he half raises his deep sunken eye,
And the motion unsettles a tear;
The silence of sorrow it seems to supply,
And asks of me why I am here.

Ballad.

When Albert threw himself on the couch which he found in the room to which he had been conducted by the individual whose guest he had so unexpectedly become, it was his resolution not to rest for more than an hour or two, and to leave the house the moment it should be day-light.

It therefore gave him some uneasiness when he unclosed his eyes to perceive that it was broad day. The sun shone, and he feared it was near noon. Ashamed of the indolence with which he reproached himself, he hastily started up

Digitized by Google

and sought the door of his chamber, inwardly resolving that no entreaty should induce him to delay one moment longer, however strenuously the claims of hospitality might be asserted.

His resolution was strong, but he soon found that he had not the means of carrying it into effect. The door was secured, and the fastenings were on the other side. This created a momentary feeling of uneasiness. He endeavoured to dismiss it by supposing some accident or mistake had occasioned that which had startled him.

All his efforts to open the door were unavailing. He tried to force it to no purpose, and nothing remained but to attempt, by an exertion of his voice, to draw attention to his situation.

No answer was immediately returned to his calls, but he had not often repeated them, when a door, opposite that from

Digitized by Google

which he had entered, moved, and his guide on the preceding night appeared.

Albert had not been aware that there was a second door, and could not help testifying that the discovery gave him surprise.

"Why this noise?" demanded the master of the house. "Were you in a tavern, filled with noisy brawlers, you could not use your lungs more freely, if the drawer failed you when you sought breakfast."

"I beg your forgiveness," Albert said, "if I have been over-loud; but the door of the chamber — the only one as I supposed, had been secured on the wrong side, and having slept too long, I was impatient to set forward."

"Pass this way, and you shall find breakfast ready for your refreshment."

"I thank you, Sir, but I must decline trespassing further on your kindness."

Digitized by Google

"It shall not be deemed a trespass; therefore, not to exchange fine speeches, which were but to waste time, come you with me and eat."

"In this I cannot comply with your bidding," said Albert, following his host, who now walked into the adjoining room, where a fire was seen, and breakfast waited.

"Come, young man," the other exclaimed, "it is not well that you should continue fasting when food woos your appetite."

"I feel no inconvenience from hunger, and can only think of hastening my departure."

"Nay, for matter of that, you may unhesitatingly fall to, without any fear of lengthening your stay within these walls, which you are so resolute to leave."

"I have erred by remaining your

Digitized by Google

guest so long, and must, therefore, turn a deaf ear to your kindness, of which I cannot avail myself without adding to the delay already too great, for which I may justly be reproached."

"It is not so, and again I tell you that you may eat most leisurely, yet nothing retard your departure; for since the language of courteous invitation will not induce you to remain as friend with friend, know, stripling, you are not at liberty to pass from this place."

"Not at liberty! What mean you, Sir?"

"Even that which I have said."

"And am I really a prisoner?"

"If to be constrained to stay where you may find tolerable entertainment, be imprisonment, then you are a prisoner."

"And by what right," Albert proudly

Digitized by Google

and resentfully demanded, "am I detained?"

"By that most legitimate and most readily acknowledged of all rights, the right of power. My gates are well secured. Trusty servants, armed, watch them, and wait my bidding to dispose of you as shall seem good to me. This is a right which it were folly to question."

"But it is an exercise of power which calls for reprobation."

"Then give it. But when given, you must still submit, and this is all-sufficient for me. Would you say more?"

"I would fain persuade myself that you are not serious. Such treatment I little expected, when you kindly, as I thought, pressed me to be your guest last night."

"It was not my purpose to make you expect it."

Digitized by Google

"And why should you make me prove it? What motive can you have for dealing thus harshly with one wholly unknown to you?"

"You are not wholly unknown to me."

"You can know but little of me, for, to the best of my belief, we never were known to each other before the accidental meeting of yesterday."

"This you may believe, but know, young man, our meeting last night was not accidental."

"Indeed!"

"I had watched for you."

"Watched for me! — I suspect you have mistaken me for another."

"I know whose errand you are impatient to perform. I have not mistaken you. You are one of the agents of Challoner."

Albert, who had really begun to hope that he had been detained by mistake, was

Digitized by Google

now undeceived. The mention of the name of Challoner convinced him that something of the business on which he had been sent had transpired. The other proceeded to give further proof of this.

"Challoner, I know, is engaged in practices which will probably ere long bring him to his end. You have been seduced to be the partner of his treason. Be honest, and confess it. Join with me to baffle him, and all may yet be well with you."

Albert frowned disdainfully at this proposal, but spoke not.

"What is your decision?" demanded the stern and unruffled Johnson, for he it was from whom the enquiry proceeded.

With indignation flashing from his eyes, Albert replied, —

"I had hoped you would have read it in my countenance. But that I fear silence may be misunderstood, I would

Digitized by Google

disdain to reply to a proposition so infamous."

"Pause, young man. The consequences of your persevering in this folly may be more serious than you imagine."

"I scorn to think of consequences."

"Then heavily will they fall on you. But blind, impetuous, and thankless for offered kindness as you are, I will still, in mercy, give you a chance of being saved from the effects of your rashness. At present you are wholly in my power, and I alone can pronounce on your fate. When once I place you in other hands, as soon I shall, if you change not your course, it will no longer depend upon me whether or not your life shall be spared. My pity then, shall allow you some days for reflection. If in that time you deem it not wise to take the course I would recommend, why then pursue the opposite

Digitized by Google

one, and be your blood on your own head."

With these words, of which the closing expressions were uttered with all the awful solemnity of deadly menace, Albert saw Johnson quit the room, leaving him in a state of grief and embarrassment which it is no easy task to paint. That his own life was in danger, might justify some concern, but this affected him less than the shame and reproach which he felt would attach to him for having, at the very outset of his career, thus fallen into the power of that party whose usurpation it was the object of his patron and friend to terminate. He feared that it would be thought he had betrayed the cause which he had espoused; and burning tears of bitterness and self-reproach stood in his eyes, when he reflected on the ease with which he had been duped.

But it soon occurred to him that self-

Digitized by Google

reproach was useless, and began to consider if the evil could be repaired. Of this there seemed little hope. He however judged, that matters might be rendered worse than they were at that moment, if his jailer, for that character he now gave to the owner of the house in which he was a prisoner, should possess himself of the important papers committed to his care before he parted from Challoner. The moment he found himself not at liberty to depart, he had thought of these, and exulted that they still remained about his person, though they might so easily have been taken from him while he slept. He determined on the instant to peruse them, and commit them to the flames. Thus hastily disposing of them, it was probable that he would but imperfectly inform himself of their contents, but this seemed of no vast importance, as, while there, all

Digitized by Google

knowledge of them must be useless; and when by any means he should be free, he might seek Challoner, make him acquainted with what had chanced, and obtain new instructions.

Anxious to lose no time in carrying this prudent resolution into effect, he hastily drew the packet from his bosom. Having opened it, he was about to inspect the contents, when the door opened, and Johnson re-entered. Albert had no time to conceal the papers, and he plainly perceived that they had not escaped the scrutinizing glance of his enemy, who, far from pretending not to observe them, now demanded that they should be given up to him.

"I had bethought me," he said, "that you might have papers of some importance with you. As it will be in your power to destroy them if they are not

Digitized by Google

required forthwith, I now call upon you to place them in my possession."

"The call is vain. I shall not obey it."

"Then must I compel you. Those are at hand who will promptly overpower any resistance you can offer. Use no delay, but give me the papers."

"There they are," cried Albert, "throwing them on the fire, and snatching up the poker at the same moment; and now let your emissaries advance. When these shall have become ashes, they may do so with safety, but, till then, his life will be in danger who approaches."

No answer was immediately returned to this speech. Johnson seemed at first inclined to rush to the fire-place, and snatch the half consumed documents from destruction. He however looked at the menacing attitude in which Al-

Digitized by Google

bert had placed himself, and remained at a respectful distance.

"Yet, consider," he cried, "to give these now may hereafter prove much in your favour: reflect on this ere the moment is past, and reparation impossible."

"No," said Albert. "Though I suspect not my own constancy, yet I am happy to have disposed of these unread, for now no state of weakness, to which torture may reduce, can subject me to the ignominy which you would have me welcome."

While speaking, he stood with his back to the fire, watching the motions of his adversary. He threw a glance or two round, to see that the burning went on. When the flame had subsided, he replaced the weapon with which he had armed himself.

"That duty performed," he said,

Digitized by Google

"you and your associates may do your worst. From me you shall never know aught of that which you wish to hear. Use what severity you may, I will nothing impart; I shall glory in enduring, regarding it as the just punishment of the imprudence which brought me here."

A dark contemptuous look, in which anger and laughter were combined, answered this address, and Albert was again left alone.

Too much agitated to think of refreshment, he paced the apartments to which he found himself confined. From the windows he could see nothing distinctly, but the fading foliage of the close surrounding trees. Now he reflected with sorrow on the vain hopes in which he doubted not Challoner was indulging; then on the disappointment which Bentley must experience at not seeing the

Digitized by Google

expected agent, and then rage at the duplicity which had ensnared him, and shame for the weakness which had been imposed upon, hurried his blood through his veins with feverish velocity, to torture his heart and distract his brain.

When the dinner hour arrived, a new supply of food was brought. The former remained untouched, but this called forth no remark. The table was spread with the same care as if for a friendly guest, but no one solicited him to eat. At a later hour of the day, another change took place. The gloomy being who had authorised his confinement directed and witnessed these movements, surveyed the prisoner with a curious eye, but seemed to have no intention of speaking.

"How long," said Albert, "am I to be thus detained?"

"That will depend on circumstances."

Digitized by Google

"On what circumstances?"

"On such as may occur, but which I cannot describe by anticipation."

"And are you aware of the responsibility you take upon yourself in thus lawlessly holding me your prisoner?"

"You will probably know, ere long, that you are not so held, and find, to your sorrow, that it is the law which is your enemy."

"Then why use artifice to bring me hither, and why is guilty secresy observed in keeping me?"

"When the proper time arrives for doing so, I will explain what at present perplexes you. At present I decline further conversation."

And with these words he left the room, not forgetting to fasten the door as he retired.

It was now twilight. Rage and shame had made Albert insensible to the attacks of hunger through the day, but he felt

Digitized by Google

exhausted, and scrupled not to partake of the provisions which had been set before him. He could not see that to abstain from doing so was likely in any way to baffle the designs of his persecutor, and he was not unwilling to take requisite nourishment, that, if unable to escape, he might at least be able, in the last extremity, to struggle with his foe for the luxury of vengeance in death.

He examined every part of the rooms to which he was confined, but saw nothing to encourage the idea that he could pass from them without being observed. One of the windows was only secured by a bar, which was in such a state that a moderate effort would suffice to remove it, but to do this would be of no avail, as the window was at so great a height from the ground, that he could not hope to descend from it and live. He continued to pass from one

Digitized by Google

apartment to the other, and to inspect time after time those parts of his prison whence he had hoped flight might be practicable, but which subsequent reflection had fully satisfied him was not the case.

He had passed from the chamber where he was expected to dine to that in which he had slept for the twentieth time, with the purpose above described, when his attention rested on an object which, under almost any circumstances, would have seemed too contemptible to merit one moment's notice, but which he now regarded as entitled to serious consideration. It was a dark lantern, which he remarked in one corner of his bed-room. It had been recently used. Such a lantern had been carried by the person who hovered near him on the night when the murder was committed of which Dame Neville had been accused.

Digitized by Google

The mysterious character who had brought him there had not scrupled to say that their meeting on the preceding evening was not accidental. If in this he had spoken truth, it struck Albert as not improbable that the man he perceived had then been occupied in dogging his footsteps. This idea seemed confirmed by all the incidents of that night, which now in rapid succession occurred to his memory. That person, his present enemy, and the perpetrator of the murder, he could not but suspect were the same.

His suspicions thus roused, he examined every object in the room, expecting to find new confirmation of them. He found what was more than sufficient to inflame a mind previously disturbed. On turning over the contents of a closet, he discovered a shroud. It seemed to have been carelessly thrown with other articles as rubbish, and on closely examin-

Digitized by Google

ing it he could perceive stains of blood, which the dirt it had accumulated concealed at first from his view.

Wild and indefinite ideas harassed his mind, while through the hours of darkness he continued to walk backwards and forwards in silent sleepless sorrow. Midnight had long been passed, when he at last reclined on the bed, but without thought of repose. He heard one approach, and the words "Are you waking?" were gently whispered. Albert started, and almost believed the sound to be imaginary, but doubt was instantly removed by the words being distinctly repeated.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. XIII.

She throws
Her hand to heaven: and in a wondering guise,
Stares on each object with her fixed eyes.

BROWNE.

THOUGH the words were most distinctly heard, Albert was not quite certain that they were addressed to him. But as nothing was risked by assuming this, he scrupled not to answer

"I am awake, and have not sought sleep."

The door was opened without noise, and a female appeared. She entered without embarrassment, and speaking still in a whisper, advised that they should pass from the chamber in which they met to the next. Without waiting for his answer

Digitized by Google

she led the way, and having reached it, placed her lamp on the table, and stedfastly gazed on Albert for some moments in silence.

The being who had thus unexpectedly approached him was a perfect model of symmetry. Her features were regular and beautiful, but her complexion had the florid hue of fever imprinted on it, in place of the blooming rose of health. Her eyes were of a pale blue. There was an expression of wildness in them, which formed a singular contrast to the collected calmness of her general deportment.

Incapable of forming even a conjecture as to her quality or the object of her visit, Albert returned her gaze. His heart was too full of more oppressive cares to make him sensible of the awkwardness of thus receiving a lady who had honoured him with so unusual a mark of

Digitized by Google

her attention, or he would have felt embarrassment at the lack of words which he experienced at that moment.

"I wonder not," said the visitor, "that you are at a loss how to address a female who has not scrupled to intrude on you at an hour when it might have been expected that you and all within these walls were buried in sleep. But I had reasons for believing that you had not sought rest, and I wished to console the lonely heart that sorrowed in unlooked-for and inexplicable captivity."

"In truth, maiden, your conduct is singular. I hoped for no society this night, and least of all did I calculate on seeing so fair a comforter."

"Spare flattery, Sir. It was not for this that I ventured hither to warn you of the dangers which beset your path."

"Of what do you speak?"

"Of the perils which threaten your

Digitized by Google

life from the wrath of my father, and the unsparing vengeance with which the faction now in power are disposed to pursue all who rebel against their authority."

"But I have done nothing against it."

"You are known to be connected with those who are disaffected, and who have proposed to bring back the son of the late king."

"These things may be surmised, but proofs cannot be found."

"Proofs have been found," she answered, raising her voice, "proofs which will be deemed quite sufficient to send you to the scaffold."

"Really, lady," said Albert, "in this I think you are deceived."

"Trust me, I am not. I fear you will find, to your cost, that my information is too correct."

"And what is the comfort which, un-

Digitized by Google

der such circumstances, you can have to offer?"

"I would ask you, if you have well weighed the proposition made to you by my father, and if you can bring yourself to do what he would recommend?"

"Never."

"Then do I fear that your fate is irrevocably sealed."

"Is it so? I had begun to hope, when you spoke of comfort, seeing that you have the means of traversing this building alone and at your pleasure, that it might not be impossible for your compassion to release me."

"This I would gladly do, but — but —"

She paused, and a tear trembled in her eye. Albert believed that his appeal had not been wholly made in vain. Eager to improve the impression which he thought had been produced, he took her

Digitized by Google

hand within his, while he apostrophised her with tender but respectful earnestness.

"Nay, lovely one! start not difficulties. Let not the gem which trembles in that eye have beamed on me in vain."

The hand which he had taken was not withdrawn. It was rather yielded with an air of kindness and concession, and her tears continued to flow.

"I would it were in my power," she said, "to give you the liberty you claim. Believe me, this would gratify me much, for my bosom is tortured beyond description by the thought that a few weeks must give you to a death of shame."

"Use the power you evidently possess, and let me pass hence this night. Nay, turn not away disgusted by the selfish eagerness with which I seem to plead for life. It is not for myself that I solicit. Give me freedom but for a few hours."

Digitized by Google

The lady smiled incredulously at this proposal.

"You think, once free, that I would not return. By Heaven, I would, and with transport, to undergo whatever rigours may be thought fit to punish my offending, so I might be permitted, not to tell where I am detained, but merely to announce that I have failed. Let me do this to save a kind friend, who may otherwise be ruined by my miscarriage."

"Whatever her will," she answered, "Henrietta has not the means of complying with your request. Were all suspicion asleep, and none on the watch, it would still be no easy task to get you away, the consent of my father being withheld. The walls which surround the grounds of which this mansion is the centre, cannot be overleaped without some aid, and the upper part of them is formed by bricks laid together, uncon-

Digitized by Google

nected by any cement between; so that an attempt to place a ladder against this defence would not fail to occasion their fall, the noise of which would at once give notice of the attempt."

"Can this be in no way avoided?"

"It cannot. To-morrow, indeed, I might contrive to get a portion of the loose bricks removed after dark. There is a ladder on the premises, by which the wall could be surmounted. But then—"

"O start no chilling fear, having permitted me to hope for your generous aid."

"But have you no care for the manner in which the aid you call generous shall be requited?"

"To what do you allude?"

"What think you will be the fate of Henrietta, this being accomplished; when, having liberated the captive on whose

Digitized by Google

safe keeping her father's fortunes, nay, perhaps, his very life, depends, she alone remains to meet the fearful storm of his displeasure."

"He surely would not deal harshly with his child."

"Not deal harshly with his child!" she exclaimed, and her eyes glistened with fires, which frenzy seemed to kindle. "Has he not," she added, in a low and plaintive tone, "has he not been harsh to me? O yes," she added, with a sigh, "I know him well. — I know the terrible wrath which will consume me, when he shall find that I have dared anew to rebel against his will."

"Nay, since already he has proved unkind, remain no longer in his power."

"How!"

"Be the fair companion of my flight. We shall soon gain a secure resting-place, where his frown shall disquiet you no

Digitized by Google

more. I will take care to provide for your every want; and gratitude, which can only end with the life you preserve, shall never fail to acknowledge the boon."

"May I believe this language to be that of sincerity?"

"By the honour of a man."

"The honour of a man!" she sadly repeated; "O! speak not of that; for, alas! mournful experience has taught me that men are not to be trusted."

"Your judgment on mankind is, I hope, too severe."

"Forgive me, Sir, I know not what I say. My thoughts are mixed in wild confusion, and sentiments not unfrequently stray to my tongue, and steal utterance, which ought to remain buried for ever in my heart."

"I should be sorry to know that such an impression could remain there. I would not have one corner in a bosom

Digitized by Google

so devoted to generosity, occupied by resentment or suspicion."

"Nor shall it. I will believe you what you seem, and if it should be my happy lot to snatch you from the toils in which you are now caught, I will bless the providence which preserved me for such a purpose, and cherish the belief that I may be kindly remembered by you, when I am seen no more on earth."

"Your words are strange, for you speak as if my liberty were to be the signal for your death."

"That may be."

"But I indulge the persuasion that it will not be, and that long years of joy remain in store for the generous being who bravely lends herself to oppose vindictive wrath and perfidious artifice."

"No, not for me shall years of joy be born; my fate is decided; some moments less gloomy than others I might know,

Digitized by Google

but the sky of Henrietta's destiny shall never more be cloudless."

"Thus," said Albert, "the mind oppressed by recent affliction, often feels, and too readily takes up the idea that the grief which now overwhelms will be perpetual."

"It is no passing gloom," said Henrietta, "that darkens my prospect. Mine is that mournful state in which kindness wounds, and pity degrades. But I may remain no longer; I scarcely know what I have said, but feel that something has escaped me which prudence would recall. For this night adieu. To-morrow I will return."

"To bring liberty to the captive?"

"That is more than I dare promise; but, at all events, if possible, you shall see me."

She retired as cautiously as she had entered, and by the same door, leaving

Digitized by Google

Albert in a state of the most torturing doubt. He believed that he had moved her to kindness, and he felt assured that it might be in her power to terminate the period of his captivity. But there was a strangeness in her manner which tempted him to question her sanity, and it seemed to him not the most improbable surmise in the world, that to amuse her madness, she had been allowed by her keeper or medical attendant the interview which had just taken place. This, though an extraordinary experiment, seemed to him not more unlikely than that a young female should be enabled, at her pleasure, to visit a prisoner, whose safe keeping was evidently deemed of importance, and to remain with him at midnight. If he supposed her to be much more strongly interested in his fate than it was reasonable to conclude she was, he could not account for her having

Digitized by Google

contrived to elude observation, and visit him in defiance of the ever-waking vigilance which he had grounds for regarding as the characteristic of her father.

Pondering on this subject, but vainly attempting to come to any decision, Albert sadly beheld another day open. The father of Henrietta again appeared; Albert thought the severity of his countenance had abated, but he spoke not; he curiously eyed his prisoner, as if anxious to trace that some change of purpose had been worked; and disappointed in this, his own features, by their steady contraction, evinced his resolve to be firm to the determination which he had formed.

The perfect silence with which he withdrew, was to Albert not less intolerable, than the most cutting reproach, or the fiercest menace could have been.

Digitized by Google

To remain in perfect ignorance of his intended destiny, was more than he could bear with patience, for though he looked forward with some interest for the promised return of Henrietta, his mind was not sufficiently made up respecting her, to feel satisfied that whatever her intentions might be her words were entitled to serious regard. He was, therefore, tempted to accost the only person who could with certainty resolve the question he was disposed to propound. But he doubted whether to use the language of entreaty or demand. He had too much cause to fear that neither would be attended to, but silence was the worst he could anticipate, and the worst was already experienced.

With this feeling, when the last meal of the day was introduced, and Johnson for the third time appeared to satisfy himself that the prisoner was in safe custody,

Digitized by Google

Albert spoke to him: his tone was not conciliating; though his words were few. Impatience and reproach were breathed with each, while he demanded,

"How long, Sir, am I to remain here?"

A glance of contempt and defiance was the only answer which the question at first elicited, but after a pause of some seconds a reply was given.

"Till one of us becomes prudent. Till you do what I advise, or I hand you over to those who will know how to requite your senseless obstinacy."

Digitized by Google

CHAP. XIV.

Hath not this present Parliament,
A ledger to the devil sent,
Fully empowered to treat about,
Finding revolted witches out?
And has not he, within a year,
Hanged threescore of them in one shire;
Some only for not being drown'd?

BUTLER.

EARLY on the day following the arrival of the witch-finder, Thorpe was called by Matthew Hopkins, who was well disposed to proceed to business without delay.

"It is not," said he, "that I would hurry, urgent as my affairs may be, on my own account, although, as you must be well aware, twenty shillings per town or village (which is all I demand for clearing them) is but sordid pay."

Digitized by Google

"Methinks it is too small," Thorpe replied.

"Especially when it is borne in mind that I have horse and man to pay, and generally travel a company of three; nevertheless, moved by the sinful and gold-loving speeches of the Sadducees, many of those whom I have relieved, have paid no more than that sum."

"Such meanness ought not to be endured in any case," Thorpe replied, with enthusiasm highly gratifying to the witch-finder, as it was accompanied by a cordial pressure of the hand, into which, at that moment, two *Jacobuses* were slipped.

"You," said the benevolent Matthew Hopkins, with a most gracious smile, "take the right mode of securing the relief you crave, which, if my skill can avail, with God's blessing, you shall soon have."

Digitized by Google

Thorpe then consulted with him on the steps proper to be taken, and proposed to begin, as this was Friday, by repeating the experiment which had formerly been made at the wrong time. The consent of the magistrates had been already obtained: he therefore directed that a cow should be brought forth, and disfigured as before, in order to discover in which direction the witch lived. For his own satisfaction, on the preceding day, before he presented himself to Thorpe, Hopkins had taken great pains to make himself acquainted with the situation of Dame Neville's cottage. He had more than one reason for doing this.

"Heyday!" cried James, who had heard what was intended, and now entered the room, in which Thorpe and the witch-finder were conferring, "why what a racket you are kicking up in the

Digitized by Google

village. The rabble rout are already on the alert to hunt your poor old cow, father."

"Son, this is a very solemn subject," cried the Senior Thorpe.

"A solemn subject," echoed James, "I wish it may not prove a *grave* one to poor Dame Neville."

"At any rate, it is not fit for your mad humours, and therefore treat this wise and heaven-gifted man with more decorous civility."

"Truly, Sir, I have not thought to be uncivil. However, I will speak in a more sober tone. Pray, Master Hopkins, supposing a witch being convicted through the heaven-giftedness of your worship, should be with devil or with imp, for, perhaps, you would deem it wrong to say with child, I would then know if it would be judged fitting to allow of that delay which the law grants,

Digitized by Google

where a female, not a witch, intimates that she thinks of producing a young malefactor?"

"That of which you speak," said the witch-finder, "must be governed by the circumstances of the case."

"Then, in some instances, delay may be admitted. That is enough for me. I have now a request to make. As your occupation may throw you in the way of a matter of this sort, you will much oblige me, if you can get me the cause of one such delay on moderate terms; as I have often thought I should like to have a sucking devil to bring up by hand."

"Peace," cried Thorpe, "this is folly."

"That can give no offence to Master Witch-finder, but, to my poor thinking, one domestic devil, which like a cat would suffer none of his fellows to ap-

Digitized by Google

proach would be no bad addition to a genteel establishment."

Green now entered to announce that all was ready, and Hopkins declared he would instantly superintend the proceeding.

"But tell me, Master Hopkins," said James, "supposing the cow were to go to the door of Dame Neville, what next is to be done?"

"Ay," said Thorpe, "it may be as well to decide that at once."

"Thus, then," the witch-finder answered, "do I intend to proceed. When it shall be discovered where the witch abides, there can remain little doubt who she is. Therefore, I judge those in office must agree, that it will be right to try her further, and the ordeal by water cannot, so I should guess, be objected to. But wishing to proceed with all caution and gentleness, I would first propose

Digitized by Google

that some discreet and godly matrons in the neighbourhood do examine, her in order to discover what devil's marks may be about her person."

"This," said Thorpe, "is dealing too kindly."

"By your leave, no, Master Thorpe. If indeed the world were peopled but with pious folk, for the most part, I should be of accord with you, and proceed to the water trial strait, but there are so many scoffers, sadducees, and friends of the old father of all mischief abroad, that it is better to err on the side of mercy, that they may have little to say. Therefore, having made the search I propose, should a doubt appear in her favour, I would merely put her to the walking test."

"What may that be?" James enquired.

"That is not much. It simply consists in keeping the party constantly

Digitized by Google

walking for four and twenty, or it may be eight and forty hours without rest or food."

"This," exclaimed James, "is what you consider erring on the side of mercy!"

"Questionless, it is so. I am partial to using gentle means first."

"Really, Master Hopkins, I should little like to experience your tenderness in the way you describe. But, supposing Dame Neville to be a true witch, pray tell me what the devil must be about, not to exert his power to protect one of his favourites? Marry, Sir, if I were Satan, and Dame Neville mine, and you came to shew her your gentleness, I would sooner have my tail cut off than allow it, and should be much inclined to take you on one of my horns, and give you a toss from St. Albans to Dunstable."

"In this," said the witch-finder, "you

Digitized by Google

shew your ignorance of the general doings of the prince of darkness. On such occasions, he deserts his well-beloved — and why? Because it is in his avaricious nature to covet so much the immediate possession of a soul which is his by covenant, that he cares not to save the witch from justice which will the sooner hand over the prize to him."

"But if the witch possess the powers which you say he gives, what shall prevent her from harming those who seek her destruction?"

"Again, Master James, do you manifest most lamentable ignorance. Well has it been told by our British Solomon, the great King James, that 'If men be slothful, God can make them instruments of punishment; but when those who are properly qualified are active in examining them, God will not permit them

Digitized by Google

nor their master to interrupt so good a work.' That wise monarch, observe you, does not say that ignorant persons may meddle with safety, but his words are, 'Where God begins to strike by his lawful lieutenants, it is not in the devil's power to defraud or bereave him of the office, or effect of his powerful and revenging sceptre.'"

"But why should these severe measures be adopted, when by means of white witch-craft, as I have heard, the devil's friends might be easily foiled? Is not this the case?

"It certainly is. I, simple person as I am, know many herbs which, plucked at the proper time, would foil some of the most cunning."

"Indeed!"

"There is one plant I could name, brought originally from the east, would baffle Satan's best agents, but then it

Digitized by Google

must be taken from the earth on Palm Sunday; these verses being uttered at the same moment, which by the way are of great antiquity:

"Haile be thou holie hearbe
Growing on the ground,
All in the mount Calvarie
First wert thou found;
Thou art good for manie a sore
And healest manie a wound;
In the name of sweet Jesus
I take thee from the ground."

"Why, then," said James, "I reiterate the question, are not such measures pursued instead of those you now contemplate, which would baulk the wicked, and yet give them time for repentance?"

"To this, my answer is, first, that I have not that tenderness either for the devil or his beloved, to screen them by half measures; next, I would remark, that to do so were to fly in the face of God's command, which distinctly says,

Digitized by Google

'Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live;' and, thirdly, I would tell that to hope for repentance is vain where a witch is concerned, for the old serpent will not be put off his bargain. The witch can no more repent than she can shed tears."

"And can no witch shed tears?"

"No."

"Then Dame Neville cannot be one, for when I met her one day after Old Wash, at the Red Lion, had been threatening to have her burnt for turning his beer sour, I saw a tear — not one, but many, trickle down her woe-worn face."

"You pervert what I say after the manner of the evil doers abroad, who deem themselves most wise in their generation. A witch can cry till she gets into the hands of justice. Then let me see her cry."

Thorpe left the house, accompanied

Digitized by Google

by Hopkins, to superintend the preliminary experiment. A crowd had assembled for the double sport of hunting a cow, and detecting a witch. The rabble divided their stares between the oddly disfigured animal they were about to torment, and the important personage by whose advice this foolery was to be practised. The signal was given by Hopkins, who for that purpose waved his high-crowned hat to the mob. At once a thousand voices were heard in hoarse, but jocund discord, and as many sticks and goads were applied to the poor animal's back and sides. The cow bellowed, the mob shouted, and by the judicious directions of Hopkins and his man, every thing went on very favourably. The lecture which Thorpe had given to those who baulked him on the former occasion, was not thrown away. It was indeed so well understood in

Digitized by Google

which direction they were to go, and Thorpe's labourers were so anxious to atone for their former failure, that unusual discipline prevailed, and the frantic object of their cruelty was soon seen desperately rushing through all obstructions towards the humble residence of the suspected female.

The wide-spreading tumult was heard afar, and reached the poor retreat of Dame Neville. Little imagining the cause of the disturbance, the unusual clamour induced her to walk to the extremity of the enclosure belonging to her cottage. She saw a multitude of persons in motion, but the noise which they made had so much mirth in it, that she felt quite satisfied no one was in danger. She perceived the riotous merry makers, one and all, bend their steps towards the place were she stood, and at length she discerned the goaded animal

Digitized by Google

which they followed. Raging with the intolerable torture inflicted by the blows of the multitude, the creature happened at this moment to shake from its horns the tatters which had till then adhered to them. A yell of strange exultation burst from the mob; and, stunned by the uproar, Dame Neville hastened to conceal herself from the advancing rioters.

"See you there," said Hopkins to Thorpe, who kept close to him nearly in the front of the mob. "See you with what shame and confusion she tries to hide herself."

"I marked it well."

"Does not this show guiltiness of heart?"

"No doubt," Thorpe replied.

"Had she not known that she was guilty, she would never have fled thus precipitately."

Digitized by Google

"Certainly not. This of itself is in my mind enough to condemn upon."

"It tells me, Master Thorpe, that she knows the devil is disposed to abandon her."

Thorpe was much comforted by the assurance. He augured most favourably of the ultimate success of their undertaking from this omen, and the expedition with which the witch had been traced by the means used that day, filled him with admiration of the skill of Hopkins. Though naturally humane, he was so steeled against the devoted Dame, from the enormities of which he believed her to be guilty, that he felt no more concern for the affliction she might prove, than he would have experienced at beholding the dying struggle of a wolf, or the last writhings of a viper.

But little talent and exertion were now required to drive the cow close up

Digitized by Google

to the door of the cottage. The welkin again rung with the acclamations of the rabble, and the poor beast was now honoured with the senseless plaudits of her followers, many of whom approached, and would fain have patted her to show their kindly feeling, if the irritated state to which she had been brought had not made her too startlish to admit of their coming near with safety.

Thorpe directed that the animal, having performed all that was expected from it, should be taken away. The assembled throng gave a passage to their late victim, and every eye now prepared to banquet on the distress of a human sufferer.

A violent knocking at the door was commenced, accompanied by threats to force it. This last measure was rendered unnecessary, by its being opened to them. The crowd were on the ad-

Digitized by Google

vance, when Dame Neville stepped forward, and mildly demanded what was required.

Her firmness overawed for a moment the brawlers, who had summoned her to their tribunal, and no answer was given.

"What want you, I enquire, that thus in the face of day you so rudely assail my humble dwelling?"

A momentary pause ensued, which was however broken by the voice of one who was not of the foremost rioters, —

"A witch and her imps."

The silence once interrupted, a thousand voices were now heard to demand her surrender—the giving up of her familiar, and the bringing forward of her friend and paramour, the devil.

The uproar spread, taking every possible shape of menace. Some told of the pains to which she would presently be subjected here, and others announced

Digitized by Google

the never-ending tortures of another world. Undismayed amidst the tumult, Dame Neville offered not to retire; her mind was made up to meet and rebut the calumnies of which she had long been the object, and without using speech or gesture calculated to provoke by useless daring, she disdained to supplicate. A momentary silence having occurred, she again accosted the foremost of the multitude, among whom Thorpe, Hopkins, and James were now ranged."

"You demand that I shall be punished as a witch. Let it be shown that I am one, and I shall be content to suffer. But where are the proofs—where the witnesses against me?"

"O! we have proofs," cried one.

"Ay, ay, proofs enough." "Proofs enough, you she-devil," and similar speeches were vociferated.

Digitized by Google

"Then let your witnesses stand forward," cried the accused, with more energy than she had previously exerted, "and bring your proofs without delay."

"What think you of this?" James enquired; "you see she courts the trial."

"Was ever such hellish effrontery, such matchless impudence!" exclaimed Thorpe.

"Nay, father," cried James, "may this not spring from consciousness of innocence?"

"Innocence!" echoed the father, in a tone which severely reproved the folly which could admit such a supposition for a moment. "But ask Master Hopkins."

James looked round for Hopkins, but did not immediately see him. He was about to express his surprise, when he saw the witch-finder make his appearance from the cottage. Engaged in

Digitized by Google

directing the pursuit, Hopkins had tucked his cloak under his arm. He felt that his general appearance was not a little disordered, and when Dame Neville came forth he passed into the cottage to arrange his dress, that he might not make an undignified appearance before the throng, in whose presence he was to exhibit the sublimest mysteries of his art.

And now every-thing being adjusted, the witch-discoverer stalked forward. He wore a cloak surmounted by a white linen collar, which spread over each shoulder. The cloak was thrown open by the elbow of the right arm, which was placed a-kimbo, while the left was half extended, the hand grasping a staff as tall as himself, which was somewhat larger than a common halbert stick at the top, but came tapering downwards till it was not larger than the fore-finger

Digitized by Google

of a man. From time to time he majestically waved this, the sceptre of command, to direct those near him to advance or retire. His bushy hair surmounted by a tall and rather pyramidic hat, gave his upper part an air of grim authority, and his boots, the tops of which presented the semblance of two funnels beneath his knees, were furnished with formidable spurs, which, however inconvenient, he would not put off on such occasions, from a wish to retain all the importance of hurry, while following his vocation.

Thus terrible in appearance, as well as in influence, the witch-finder advanced to perfect the work he had so successfully begun.

"The witch," said Thorpe, "says she fears not enquiry, and thereupon my son would fain persuade, that she must needs be innocent. How say you?"

"Marry, it is not so, for let me tell

Digitized by Google

both you and your son that the devil's policy is great, in persuading many to come of their own accord to be tried, persuading them that their *marks* are so close they shall not be found out."

"But do they court enquiry?" James demanded.

"They do; such is their unblushing impudence. I have known divers of them come ten or twelve miles to be searched of their own accord, and get hanged for their labour."

Thorpe here indulged in expressions admiring the benevolent dispensations of Providence, which had decreed that such artifices should be resorted to in vain.

Matters were thus brought into as fair a train as could be desired for the witch-finder. The situation of poor Dame Neville was one by no means enviable. The alarm with which she retreated when the approach of her persecutors

Digitized by Google

was first beheld, and the resolution with which she subsequently defied them to prove what they charged against her, were considered by those with whom she had to deal, to be equally unfavourable to the plea of innocence. The former manifested a just dread that her crimes could no longer pass unpunished — the latter proved her so perfectly indurated, that nothing could shame her, and that no punishment which might be inflicted could be too severe. Hopkins now commenced.

"So, my dear dainty firebrand, as the devil, your master, calls you, I have caught you, have I! You, I dare say, considered yourself as secure as the witches of Manningtree ever thought themselves, before I, under God, was the means of ridding the country of them, by the timely aid of the gallows."

Digitized by Google

"Man," cried Dame Neville, "in what have I deserved to be thus reproached?"

"A notable question, truly," said the discoverer. "What! forsooth, witchcraft is so trifling a matter with you, that you are saucily to look justice in the face, and think to cozen me by pretending innocence!"

"I am a peaceful humble sojourner of small pretence; but surely, in the matter charged against me, most innocent."

"We shall see," the witch-finder rejoined, "we shall see, my dear duckling, how innocent you are. Come tell me the number of your imps?"

"I know not what you mean."

"Indeed! my brimstone darling; then perhaps you call them your familiars, or your chickens, or your babes of fire and smoke."

Digitized by Google

"God protect me!" exclaimed the supposed witch, "what can this mean?"

"The devil protect you, is what you ought to say," continued Hopkins. "But by mentioning the name of God, you think to deceive me, and induce belief that you are not what you are well believed to be. But I am not to be so bamboozled. Can you say the Lord's prayer? Since you want to show what you can do, answer me that."

Dame Neville had been well content, had nothing more been required than was now demanded. But it never entered into her mind that what was so very easy could be a test. The bantering and angry tone in which she was accosted made it impossible for her to suppose that she was seriously required to vindicate her character by repeating the Lord's prayer, and she remained silent.

Digitized by Google

Hopkins took advantage of this pause, which he knew how to interpret.

"Now the witch is caught, and, truth to say, in my simple judgment, further enquiry is hardly needed. Nevertheless, go on if you will.

"She cannot say the Lord's prayer"—"She does not know one word of it"—"Her mouth is closed"—resounded on all sides.

"Wretched woman, confess thy guilt," said Thorpe, in a tone of remonstrance.

"Can you not repeat the Lord's prayer?" James asked. "Methinks that were not so hard a task."

"If that be required of me, I cannot fear to do it. But I understood not that it was expected I should repeat it now."

"Nor is it, my lovely fire and smoke favourite," Hopkins observed; "for we expect not that you can do any thing of

Digitized by Google

the kind; but if you think otherwise, begin it."

"I have need of prayer, the Almighty knows," said Dame Neville, "and though I have not sought to make public my devotions, thus pressed, I will comply."

"Now listen all," cried the witch-finder, and holding his staff with both hands, and leaning slightly against it, his eyes fixed on the face of the accused, he prepared to detect any error into which she might fall.

With uplifted hands, Dame Neville strove to lift her mind from the persecution which she endured, that the prayer she uttered might not idly fall from her lips. Silence was demanded from the crowd, and the parties from whom it was expected, after breaking it a hundred times by calling out "Silence," were at length tolerably still. She then began —

Digitized by Google

"Our Father, *who* art in heaven,"—

"Mark you that, neighbours!" shouted Hopkins, "now are you convinced. Instead of 'Our Father, *which*,' this horrid witch can only say 'Our Father, *who*.'

The quickness with which this sagacious discovery had been made, raised the witch-finder very much in the estimation of the crowd, and his praises were clamoured from all quarters.

"Go on," he cried, "go on; if you are not now convinced that the devil, allpotent as you have heretofore thought him, is not yet capable of teaching the Lord's prayer to those who bind themselves by covenant to sin against it—go on."

"Nay," cried the sufferer, "since I am to be thus dealt with, interrupted, and obstructed, it is in vain to strive against the cruelty which assails.'

"She owns that it is all in vain. The

Digitized by Google

devil forsakes her, my friends," cried the discoverer, with a loud voice, and the announcement was answered by a new shout.

"What more need be done?" Thorpe enquired.

"In good truth, methinks, but little; for small additional proof is wanting. But, however, let search now be made for the marks, by which the devil has distinguished his darling. Divers sober matrons are ready at the cottage near the river to do all that it is meet should be done."

Hopkins, his assistants, and their followers, proceeded to act upon this resolution forthwith. They compelled Dame Neville to accompany them, and the tumult was removed to the margin of the Ver, in which it was intended the last scene of this tragical farce should be acted.

Digitized by Google

But before leaving the dwelling of the reputed witch, at the desire of Thorpe, Hopkins entered it, to look for the charmed fire, before which, his effigy, as he supposed, had been wasting. He sought in vain for the fire, but he presently brought forward what satisfied Thorpe quite as well, a small waxen image which seemed to have been exposed to heat, and subsequently to have been thrown into the ashes. Thorpe's exultation was at its height when this decisive proof was exhibited. He now appealed to his son, and to all near him, if the pangs of which he had complained were but ideal, and if the proceedings of this day were other than important.

And he believed what he said. He used no artifice, and suspected not when Hopkins entered the habitation of the intended victim to arrange his dress, that

Digitized by Google

he carried, wrapped in his cloak, the image now produced, for the purpose of depositing it where it was found.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. XV.

For, as in a secret murther, if the dead carkass be at any time thereafter handled by the murtherer, it will gush out of bloud, as if the bloud were crying to heaven for revenge of the murtherer. God having appointed that secret supernaturall signe for triall of that secret supernatural crime, so it appeares that God hath appointed (for a supernaturall signe of the monstrous impiety of witches) that the water shall refuse to receive them in her bosom.

KING JAMES.

THE notions of Thorpe on the subject of witchcraft were such, that no trick could be attempted by Hopkins which was not sure to succeed with him. In the waxen doll, while he gazed on it with mingled joy and horror, he thought he could perceive that his own features had been copied with a degree of accuracy which no human art could reach. Shuddering, he contemplated the magical

Digitized by Google

power which had been directed against him, while indescribable exultation filled his bosom at the thought that the expedition which he had assisted in planning had been crowned with such brilliant success.

Arriving at the place to which it had been proposed to adjourn, the females who had consented to assist on this grand occasion were found ready to perform their part. Hopkins craved some pause, while he addressed them as a judge would a grand jury, directing them how to proceed in the enquiry which they had been called there to make. He told them they were to ascertain whether or not the accused had three teats, but he remarked to them that they must not expect the third one to be precisely like the others. Sometimes the devil caused that which he provided for the accommodation and nourishment of his imps,

Digitized by Google

to resemble a pimple; at other times it wore the appearance of a mole, and very frequently it would appear no other than the prick of a pin. These varieties, and the possibly minute size of that for which they sought, made it necessary to use great diligence in the search.

Dame Neville was taken into the cottage. At this moment a sparrow flew over the crowd, and settled on the roof of the house. The people generally took no notice of it, but the moment Hopkins saw the bird he perceived a new proof of guilt, and called out,

"You see yon thing, neighbours," pointing to the sparrow.

"Mean you that bird?"

"That thing in the shape of a sparrow is no true bird. This is one of the witch's familiars, who wanting suck, has followed her from her home."

Digitized by Google

"So I judged," said Thorpe. "But tell me, good Master Hopkins, by what indubitable sign shall the familiar be known, from the thing of which it wears the resemblance."

"By observation, and especially by noting the time, place, and circumstances of its appearance. Why, I pray you, should a sparrow, which is naturally a timid and modest bird, come here in presence of this congregation? Why should it settle on the very top of this dwelling?"

"Pooh!" said James, "I have sometimes marked sparrows to be so saucy, that I could hardly scare them away by shouting with all my might and main. Is this the form in which imps, as you call them, always come?"

"Certainly not. I have seen a familiar wear the shape of a butterfly."

Digitized by Google

"Why then I suppose any bird, beast, or insect, found near the abode of one accused of witchcraft, may be made a familiar."

"The devil is not nice about the vehicles he selects for his offspring to travel in to work his will. When I first commenced witch-discoverer for the benefit of the whole kingdom, it was at Manningtree in Essex. A witch there, after being kept from sleep three nights, was compelled to call her whole family. The first imp was *Hold*, who came in like a white kitling; the next was *Jamara* who looked like a spaniel without legs. *Vinegar Tom* was like a greyhound, with the head of an ox; and on my telling him to be gone to the place from whence he came, he turned himself into the form of a child four years old, without a head, and presently vanished. *Sack and Sugar*

Digitized by Google

was next called, who looked like a black rabbit, and *Newes* followed in the form of a *Pole Cat.*"

The cry was now up, that the sparrow was no other than one of the witch's familiars, and a volley of stones was sent towards it by the mob, to mark their indignation against the devil and all belonging to him. This salutation induced the sparrow to take wing, and he immediately proved that his quality had not been mistaken by flying out of sight. It was unanimously resolved that the familiar, terrified by the holy proceedings then in progress, had vanished — with a noise like thunder, some said, but all were not agreed on this point.

The assistant of the witch-finder announced that he was spoken to from within. He immediately answered the call, and before any communication could be made to him, demanded if the thing

Digitized by Google

in the form of a bird had been visible in the cottage.

The answer was given with admirable caution by Mrs. Thorpe, who now came forth. — "It might have been visible, but had not been noted by the females about the witch."

"Then ask you if she has seen *Elemanzer*, *Pyewacket*, or *Greedigut*. These are some of their names, so, perchance, you may catch her off her guard."

"But first let me tell you," said the matron, "that we have discovered the devil's mark, so we think."

"Have you so? Then describe where it is, and what is it like."

"It is in the back of her neck, and has much of the appearance of a mole; so much so, that we are not quite certain it is not one, and desire proof."

"That is humanely wished, and shall be benevolently tried. That parties who

Digitized by Google

are not culpable may not suffer wrongfully, I ever take some fine pointed pins with me, by the insertion of which I can judge how the case may be. It can be no scandal to you, good woman, that in the case of a mark like this I should enter and put the woman to the test."

Mrs. Thorpe assented to this, and the discoverer having directed that silence should be observed as to what he was about to do, accompanied her into the room.

"So," said he, "this is a true and lawful mole, I warrant you. It looks marvellously like one."

While he spoke he plunged a pin into the mole. The sufferer had expected severer torture, and seemed insensible to this.

Hopkins withdrew the point, and again buried it in her neck several times,

Digitized by Google

leering merrily round at the females who were present.

"Now, good folks," he cried, "you may judge for yourselves! You have beheld the use made of this sharp instrument, and she has neither testified by word or cry that it gave pain. Use it thus on yourselves, and tell if she could so have acted, had the mark which you have discovered been anything but what it is. See, she sheds no tears. No, I will answer for it, do what you list, none shall from her eye, for, as our British Solomon most beautifully expounded, when they shake off the water of their baptism, God wisely and justly decrees that tears shall not be at their command. If they will have fire, they shall have fire, but not water when they would choose it."

It was certainly true that the accused shed no tear. The fever of shame which

Digitized by Google

consumed her at finding herself thus pursued, made her, as it did many unhappy beings who were treated in the same way, incapable of giving that relieving vent to the sorrows of the heart which, under ordinary circumstances, Nature fails not to command.

The success which had thus far crowned the operations of the examiners diffused great spirits among the crowd, who, however, being desirous to "make a day of it," now called loudly for the trial by water. The contiguity of the river made it so very easy to apply this last most decisive test, that it must be owned the temptation was considerable.

Hopkins, after consulting Thorpe, announced his readiness to comply with the public wish.

"Wherefore," said he, addressing himself to Dame Neville, "prepare yourself straight. Your hose must be removed,

Digitized by Google

and a cord of moderate strength shall attach the thumb of your right hand to the large toe of your left foot, and in like manner the toe of the right foot must be made fast to the thumb of your left hand."

"And am I to be thus exposed in the face of day? Spare me this, and take my wretched life."

"Never be in too great haste," cried the discoverer. "Your life shall be taken afterwards, it may be, my delectable firebrand, as your dear Satan calls you at times. But for the trial, that you cannot escape."

"To you," cried the sufferer, "to you, as females, I address myself, and implore you to save me from this outrage."

A look of mingled scorn and horror was the only answer vouchsafed to this appeal, yet Mrs. Thorpe, strong as her

Digitized by Google

prejudices were, could not help whispering to Mrs. Drawlington, the minister's wife, that she had never supposed the devil's power so great as it was now proved, in his being able to make such a wretch appear so gentle and pitiful."

Hopkins saw no interference was intended, and went on in a triumphant tone.

"These good and virtuous wives have nothing in common with you, and for your sham modesty about showing your feet to the honest folks here, that must be a mighty hardship to one who cares not for concealment of either soul or body from the Prince of Darkness."

"Methinks you have persecuted me enough without this additional insult."

"Insult! O, you are now wonderfully delicate. Why, you were not so nice when the devil first wooed you! But

Digitized by Google

there need be none of this, for these good women, who will prepare you for trial, will have due regard for the sex to which you still claim to belong."

He withdrew, leaving his female auxiliaries to act. A close petticoat, or bag of coarse cloth, was brought to them, by his order, with two openings, through which the feet of the party upon trial were to be passed. This the accused was now commanded to wear. Her stockings were cut away, and the toes and the thumbs bound as Hopkins had directed. When this had been done he was sent for. The summons was obeyed, and "his company," as he called two assistants, who followed, came with him. They examined the manner in which the victim had been bound, and having tightened the cords, it was intimated to the rabble that the grand trial was instantly to be made.

Digitized by Google

The under-strappers then seized the half-fainting sufferer by the hands and feet, and carried her to the river. A murmur of expectation ran through the assembled hundreds, and the tumult which had prevailed during the greater part of these proceedings, was wholly stilled. The object of persecution closed her eyes, as trembling to look on her tormentors. James gazed with impatience and disgust, which he scrupled not to express to Challoner, who was just then carried forward by a sudden movement of the crowd. The unresisting Dame Neville was placed on the water by the witch-finder's men, directed as they proceeded by their accomplished master.

No sooner did Challoner perceive how Hopkins and his associates were occupied, than he attempted to retreat. A loud burst of mirthful laugh rung in his ears, and he looked round. That

Digitized by Google

which produced this merriment was the total disappearance of the victim. After the persecution she had been subjected to, the last trial, as it was called, was regarded by Dame Neville but as the execution of the sentence given against her. In silence she breathed a prayer for the salvation of her eternal part, and, resigned to death, made no effort against it.

Challoner looked at the river, but saw not the sufferer. The water was agitated, and she seemed to be rising. It partly broke over her forehead, when she sunk again.

"She will be drowned," cried James.

"She is doing it on purpose," Hopkins replied. "Did you not see with what a snatch she went down? She will be up again anon."

"Monstrous!" exclaimed Challoner, and plunging into the river, he was seen

Digitized by Google

the next moment landing the almost expiring Dame Neville.

James rushed before the witch-finder, and snatched the burthen from the arms of Challoner.

"Bear witness, neighbours," cried Hopkins, "this man has spoiled all, and the trial must be made again."

"Villain," retorted Challoner, "and is it thus you would proceed? Is even the proof of innocence, when furnished by your own barbarous persecution, to bring death to the accused?"

"She would yet have risen."

"She would have risen in time to confront you at the last great day, to give you to that perdition which the sordid miscreant who dare thus destroy his fellow-creatures for gain, will assuredly find his doom."

"You hear what he says," cried the embarrassed Hopkins, who was awed by

Digitized by Google

the stern dignity of just reproof, and unprepared with an answer.

"Let them hear me," said Challoner, "and may God in heaven do the same, and give the thoughtless congregated brutes, who could enjoy a spectacle like this, the hearts and the understandings of men; that, instead of approving such doings, they may rather turn on the cold-blooded impostor who blasphemes the name of his Creator, while making murder a trade."

Challoner had placed himself between Hopkins and the female he had saved from death. A groan from Dame Neville, who had a little revived, but who now swooned apparently from weakness, induced him to turn. He saw James carrying her away, the crowd falling back as he approached them, and evidently affected by her distress.

Thorpe, who had been confounded at

Digitized by Google

perceiving the witch, whom he expected to see swim like a duck, go to the bottom, was so amazed, that he knew not how to act. He at length said to Challoner,

"It might have been as well that you should have waited a minute or two longer."

"What, that I might have sought a corpse for burial, instead of snatching a woman from death! Trust me, you are grossly deceived throughout. The hanging of this fellow" —(he pointed to Hopkins) "as a murderous impostor, would do you more good than swimming all the reputed witches in Christendom."

Hopkins had recovered a little of his confidence, and replied to his accuser.

"This you and other *Sadducees* may be pleased to tell. But you will not succeed in your object. This trial must begin again."

Digitized by Google

"It shall not begin again. If there be any here who would oppose murder, they will support me, and I will sooner perish than be the spectator of such enormity, or timidly shrink from opposing it."

"Here is one who will stand by you against a thousand witch-discoverers," cried Robert, who, like a faithful dog, generally contrived at all seasons to find the means of following his master.

Others, moved by the still piteous state of Dame Neville, and by the manly courage which protected her, seemed inclined to support her champion. Thorpe himself cared not to proceed, in defiance of his old friend, and his labourers receiving no hint from him, to direct them how to act, were silent.

The baffled witch-finder at length sounded a retreat, remarking, that "if witches were in favour thereabouts, they must keep them, and take consequences."

Digitized by Google

"And happy consequences they will be," said Challoner, "when such cheats as you can no longer levy contributions on the credulous. You, old acquaintance," he continued, addressing his speech to Thorpe, "are misled; but this fellow is a black-hearted wretch, who pretends to skill which he has not, that he may rob one portion of his fellow-creatures for contributing by his senseless mummery to the destruction of another."

The dame had been withdrawn. Challoner, forgetful of the drenching he had had, was disposed to follow her; but it occurred to him that it might be better not to lose sight of Hopkins too soon, lest he should make good his case with the mob. He therefore kept near him, as he and the rabble at his heels retired in silence, singularly at variance with the uproar which had accompanied their advance.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. XVI.

Speak whimp'ring younglings; and make known
The reason why,
Ye droop and weep. HERRICK.

ALBERT waited impatiently for the return of midnight, when he calculated on receiving a new visit from Henrietta. She came, but when he eagerly demanded if preparations had been made for facilitating his flight, he had the mortification to learn she had been so closely watched, that to do it was impossible, without exciting suspicion. In her judgment, till some days should have passed, it would be wholly impracticable, but the moment the slightest relaxation in that vigilance, against which it was at present useless to strive, should occur, it was her firm determination to make the attempt.

Digitized by Google

A conversation of some length followed, which principally turned on the habits and present views of Johnson. The answers which Henrietta gave to Albert's question, represented him to be a moody and ever-complaining man. He was frequently from home through the greater part of the night. Albert thought of the murder when this peculiarity was named, and made an enquiry, the answer to which did anything but remove the impression on his mind. He found that on the night in question, Johnson had been from home, and had not returned till the morning.

"But of all his peculiarities," said Henrietta, resuming a description which had been interrupted by the questions of Albert, "the most tormenting is that which is founded on the importance he attaches to dreams. The objects which present themselves to him, while he

Digitized by Google

sleeps, he regards not as the incongruous offspring of a diseased frame or disturbed mind, but contemplates them, at least where the forms of those no longer alive present themselves, as awful realities. He believes that for a time his own spirit can leave its mortal habitation, and hold familiar intercourse with those who are no more on earth. Hence, strange inconsistencies are seen in his conduct, and the wildest resolves, dictated by the shades of men, who are no more, as he tells, are frequently adopted."

"This is a strange malady."

"But recently he believed that he had been admitted to the presence of the late king, who, by his actions, for he spoke not, intimated that he could only find security by favouring the return of Charles Stuart."

"Indeed! His conduct with respect to me seems strangely opposite to what

Digitized by Google

I should expect it would be, acting under such an impression."

"I can explain it. This impression is the cause of your being here, and of my visiting you as I have done."

"Amazement! Can this be possible?"

"He believed that the best mode of seeking security, would be to connect himself by means of his daughter with some active royalist. You he conducted hither with that view, and I have been commissioned to approach you as I have done, if possible, to win your affections, and induce you to offer yourself as my future husband."

"Do I dream!" exclaimed Albert; "can your father have entertained a thought so extravagant?"

"How!" cried Henrietta, her countenance inflamed by rising indignation, "is it then so monstrous a thought in

your judgment? Am I despised, and by him who so promptly when first I saw him proposed to me to link my fate with his, and assured me of eternal constancy, and undying gratitude?"

"Gratitude, lady," cried Albert, confounded by the unexpected transition, from gentleness to fury, "I promised; but named not love nor marriage."

"You named not marriage! O sage-like caution! Do I then comprehend you aright? You too would be a betrayer!"

"Mistake me not, I——"

"No, I can mistake you no longer; I now see your true purpose. Why, then, let the law take its course, and the hangman do his office. You love another—to her you would be true, and I must be insulted and despised. O! this is brave!"

"Trust me, I meant no insult, and I do not despise. True it is that another—"

Digitized by Google

"Away, thou hast deceived me!"

"Madam!"

"Question not, but answer," cried Henrietta, while her eyes glared on the captive with more wildness than ever. "I would know if you can be moved from the resolution you avow to be faithful to another? Will danger shake it?"

Albert firmly replied, "No, lady, I will preserve it in death."

"This is well answered," said Henrietta, "and now I will be thy friend."

The vehemence of her manner was no more. The maniac stare, with which she had regarded him, subsided into a stedfast, but tranquil gaze, and the voice of rage, lately so loud, gave place to the melting tones of sorrow.

"Bear with me youth, for I will yet befriend thee," she said; "but my mind is in ruins, and I can ill regulate my ex-

Digitized by Google

pressions. You have proved yourself faithful to one beloved and absent. No other claim need be put forth to entitle you to all the aid a poor, forlorn, and persecuted wretch, as I am, can afford."

Albert listened with unfeigned astonishment to the gentle accents which now struck his ear, and could hardly persuade himself that they really issued from the lips, which, but a few moments before, had astonished him by frantic violence.

"Lady," said he, "I cannot comprehend your purpose. To me it seems that you sport with my sorrows."

"Trust me," the lady rejoined, "it is not so. I am not for mirth. I have drunk largely from the cup of bitterness, and tortured by a cruel father's unfeeling reproaches, am apt to start at the semblance of scorn; but, trust me, frail

Digitized by Google

as I have proved, and wretched as I am, I know how to admire rectitude, and generous, devoted love."

"Every word you speak but adds to the mystery which surrounds you. To see you here gave me one surprise; to hear you talk of marriage with a stranger caused another; your seeming indignation heightened my amazement, and your present gentleness supplies the climax."

"I know not that it is in my power to give reasons for these changes. The causes of what has, most naturally I confess, fixed your attention, I can state; but burning blushes invade my cheeks while I prepare for the recital, and even now I pause to determine whether pride shall bind me to silence, or anguish lead me on to sue for pity."

She hesitated for a moment, and then proceeded.

Digitized by Google

"It is decided. Some explanation is due to you to satisfy you that it is really my purpose to befriend. But expect me not to be lavish of speech. Let few words inform, and never ask me to enlarge on what I seek not to conceal, but may not have resolution fully to unfold."

"I will seek to know nothing which you would keep from me."

"The gloomy, tyrannical, and ever restless being who holds you his prisoner, is my father. Stormy scenes, in which he was engaged in early life, and the convulsions which have disturbed this country during the last ten years, have rendered him what he is. Under his stern eye my infancy and youth have been passed. I do not know that he meant to be cruel, but with him a smile was a crime, and the thoughtless playfulness of youth called forth on every occasion his resentment. I endured his

Digitized by Google

hard control till my eighteenth year was completed. It was then that he himself introduced to me the youth he designed for my future husband. Effingham was handsome and accomplished. My father's choice was mine. For him the suspicious vigilance of my parent was relaxed. We were suffered to pass days together, exempted from his observation. My tongue refuses to say more."

Albert was rather at a loss how to act. To solicit explanation he had reason to know would not be agreeable to Henrietta, and he was by no means certain that the conclusion to which his mind led him, was that at which she desired him to arrive. She resumed her speech, and doubt was at an end.

"Vain, inconstant, and ungrateful; my lover soon thought meanly of the face which he admired before it smiled

Digitized by Google

on him. He no longer sought me. My father guessed the cause, and my ingenuous folly admitted his suspicions were not without foundation."

Albert sighed while he contemplated the tumult of sorrow which now, for some moments, prevented Henrietta from continuing her narrative.

"I will not speak of the rage of which I became the object. Alas! my father is a man of such sternness, that his very love is terrible. But what were the revilings which I endured, compared with the deadly threats which he daily and hourly breathed against him who had been my lover! I doubt not these would have been carried into execution, had it not chanced that Effingham lost his life in a brawl with a young cavalier. But even his death was not sufficient to satisfy the rage of my father. He rested not till he had found means to dis-

Digitized by Google

inter the body and bring it hither. To me he exultingly displayed the ghastly form, and taunted the corpse with the past, still demanding if he would now refuse the hand which he had spurned. This horrid mockery was often repeated for my punishment. I will not paint the misery which rioted in that heart where love, and resentment, and fear, and shame combined to torture, for no description can reach it. He now dooms me, to a new punishment. He calls upon me since I knew how to be kind to him whom I have named, to use every effort to captivate you. Thus he flatters himself he may find the means of rendering Challoner, of whose hostility he stands much in awe, harmless so far as he is concerned. It was in consequence of this project, insane as it may seem, that I was enabled to approach you. Most reluctantly I appeared content to under-

Digitized by Google

take the ignominious task. But I aimed not at success, other than that of being in some way of service to you. Could I have loved a second time, I should soon have been taught from a paper which has fallen into my hands that you were not to be moved by my poor attractions."

While confirming the supposition of Henrietta, Albert would not have been so deficient in politeness as to omit paying that compliment which a lady's speaking in her own disparagement offered so good an opportunity for putting in, had not his undivided attention been drawn to the paper which she mentioned as being in her possession.

"Of what," he demanded, "do you speak? Nothing of the sort you describe can be in your keeping which has ever been mine."

"Oh yes," Henrietta replied, "it is, it must be yours. Not within these walls

Digitized by Google

are the muses sportively invoked, and none from without has come hither since your arrival."

"And what — what is the effusion of which you speak?"

"It is a poem in honour of — but I have it with me. — There it is," she added, drawing it from her bosom; "inspect it yourself."

Henrietta then displayed to the wondering Albert a poetical trifle, which ran thus: —

THE LOVER'S CHOICE.

Which of my senses, of all the five
Is the one which Reason most fondly would cherish;
And hope unimpaired that at least would survive,
Though the others were doomed prematurely to perish?

'Tis *Smelling* no doubt for we love to inhale
The sweets of the garden with opening day;
The perfumes that float on Arabia's gale,
And the fragrant charge of the zephyr in May.'

Digitized by Google

No, 'tis the *Taste*, for that can bestow
Pleasures which wake a more rapturous glow:
Pleasures her sister can never command,
Though she serves to announce them as being at hand.
How truly delicious the fruits of the earth,
Involved in the paste some fair damsel has made!
How perfect the source of contentment and mirth,
While nourishment thus by delight is convey'd!
And fill'd the gay goblet with bright blushing wine,
The treat is so blissful—'tis almost divine.

But *Hearing, ah! Hearing*, a higher claim still
Prefers and yields transports of exquisite thrill;
The epicure treat I could learn to despise,
And laugh at the joy on the palate which dies;
As that which should rank but with juvenile toys,
As only entitled to homage from boys.
But *hearing*, the learned and gay must admit,
Can give the enjoyments of reason and wit;
Enjoyments which gliding from ear to the mind,
Leave comfort, intelligence, wisdom behind:
As some hardy vines after autumn is o'er,
Still tender their fruit when their leaves are no more.
Then think of the harmonies, brilliant as dear,
Which go to the soul by the road of the ear;
And lift the charmed spirit to regions above,
Now warm with devotion, now panting with love;
Thine *hearing's* the triumph, thou giv'st us the strain
Which Horace implored his old age might sustain.

Let me pause for a moment! *Sight, sight*, what art thou,
That I have not mentioned thee even till now!

Digitized by Google

Oh! who that has seen ruddy morning arise,
Day's soft indications just traced on the skies;
Who has seen the first ray fall on turret or tree,
Or from the tall mountain descend to the sea;
Or having beheld the sun's glorious set,
As I have, Oh! who could survive, and forget!
I wonder not poets incessantly sing
Of Flora's gay train and the blossoms of spring.
Magnificent presents were these owed to sight,
If these were proclaimed her sole means of delight;
How striking the contrasts 'tis hers to display!
Each season confirms o'er the senses her sway:
And nature bewitching, however attired,
Is now as an arrogant wanton admired;
And now when no more summer's hues she can show,
For past folly sentenced to *penance* in snow.
Such objects make sight to the rational mind,
Most dear, but the loveliest still is behind;
Observe yonder beauty. How matchless the grace
Of her figure; and O! how divine is her face;
How sweetly those eyes beam, but hold—hold awhile,
What ecstasy grows on that angel-like smile:
The senses some triflers to sight would prefer
Were only created as handmaids for her.

For *Feeling!* but a moment stay,
Though modestly she comes the last;
I should be, chasing her away,
Meanly ungrateful for the past.

Can I forget the friendly grasp,
For joys of sight, sound, smell, or taste;
Or under-rate the bliss to clasp
The blushing Celia's taper waist.

Digitized by Google

To touch that hand—to press that lip,
We sigh for, yields a balm
I would not lose, Jove's cup to sip.
Then *Feeling* bear the palm.

Oh, Fate! of this the latest rob,
Which, while embracing arms entwine,
Conveys to me the generous throb,
That speaks the heart it comes from mine.

To Albert it was perfectly inconceivable how this paper could have found its way into the hands of Henrietta. He could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw that the lines, which he knew well, were actually in his own writing. With the documents which he had destroyed, that they might not be seen by Johnson, a small packet of less importance had, as he believed, been given to the flames. He was not more persuaded the instructions from Challoner were reduced to ashes, than he had been that the verses now laid before him had shared the same fate. He remembered the look of

Digitized by Google

Johnson, at witnessing the fate of the packet which he had put out of the way by that means, and for a moment he asked himself, could he have possessed himself of what had thus been destined to destruction. The thought seemed ridiculous, but how, what he saw, had been brought about, if they had perished, he could not guess. He was confident that the poem could not have been accidentally dropped on the night of his arrival. Well did he remember placing that with other trifles under a cover, which cover, with its contents, he had thrown on the fire, and, as he believed, seen consumed. Henrietta could in no way explain the mystery. All she knew was that the paper had been left on a table in her father's parlour, or ordinary sitting room. To the questions which he anxiously multiplied, no satisfactory answer could be given, and he

Digitized by Google

saw her compelled by the lateness of the hour to retire, without having obtained the smallest information that could clear up the strange and to him perfectly incomprehensible circumstance; a circumstance which but a single hour before he would unhesitatingly have declared not within the range of things possible. It was, however, in proof, that what he believed to have been destroyed might still exist to endanger the life of his benefactor, and add to the shame of his own failure.

Digitized by Google

CHAP. XVII.

Fear, anger, hope, fierce vengeance and swollen hate,
Tumultuous joy, envy and discontent;
Self-love, vain-glory, strife, and fell debate;
——All these dim the mind.

Dr. H. More.

VAINLY endeavouring to re-assure himself, Albert passed the remainder of the night and the following morning in a state of feverish anxiety. The day drew near its close, when Johnson entered. Contrary to his custom, having shut the door, he seated himself, and broke silence.

"I would speak with you, young man. Without deigning to offer explanation or defence of every part of my conduct, I purpose saying so much as may give you a correct view of your present situation, and enable you to come to a

Digitized by Google

rational decision on the offer which I have determined to make."

The tone in which Johnson spoke was little calculated to inspire hope. Albert judged that it was now that the plan of which Henrietta had apprized him would be avowed; he looked stedfastly on the speaker, but without inviting him to say more. He, however, was attentive, and this was sufficient for Johnson, who proceeded:—

"I have surprised you by my conduct, which, doubtless, seems to you little consistent with ordinary policy, and totally at variance with that timid observance of rule, which is called respect for the laws."

"In my case, undoubtedly, you have acted with a degree of violence and fraud which no laws can sanction."

"Be it so. The law, while yet I was an infant, persecuted me, and I found

Digitized by Google

myself turned loose upon the world a desperate spirit, unfavoured by the institutions of man, and therefore born to be their enemy."

"Of this I know nothing."

"But something you shall know of it. My father suffered death as a traitor. Of this I complain not. He played a daring game, lost it, and paid the stake —his life. But I do complain of torture previously inflicted by royal command."

"Of this I know nothing."

"In his case it was resorted to, and by command of King James. During those convulsions, which sent his son to the scaffold, which himself ought to have mounted, I saw with my own eyes the order in his hand-writing. I read it till each word was printed on my heart. The British Solomon as some fools, even of those whom I have employed, called

Digitized by Google

that dolt, because an idle writing had appeared, would have my father then his prisoner, questioned touching it. And how? Listen. Thus ran the horrid scroll. 'If he will not confess, the gentler tortures are first (first!) to be used unto him, *et sic per gradus ad ima tenditur*, and so God speed your good work.' Your good work!"

"This can nothing concern me."

"I said not that it did, but this I name to mark, that if I forget humanity, others first forgot it, where the name of Johnson was concerned, for thus did James direct respecting Johnson, as he chose to name himself, but really Guido Fawkes, he whom profligate folly and ignoble resentment, when his dissevered limbs and scattered dust could yield no more delight to the lovers of blood, still derided and tortured in effigy."

"I have never approved of such se-

verities, and know not why I should be called upon to answer for them."

"Say this when you have been so called upon. I am but giving you a part of my story, to the end that you may understand into what hands you have fallen, and not mistake me for a man whose conduct is to be regulated by ordinary calculations. My father died while I was but a child. When I grew up, I found myself bereft of my protector, and too well-known to pass unnoticed in my youth. I fled to Ireland, beating my father's assumed name, and there meeting with others as reckless as myself, I joined in plans, and encouraged the idea of killing the very name of Englishman."

"Is it possible! Can you be the prompter of the bloody deeds which stain the history of 1641?"

"The prompter of some, and the fearless — relentless actor of others. Why

this moves you more than I could have looked for! Why start you thus? What is your thought?"

"That it is possible I may be conversing with the murderer of my parents."

"It may be that I gave them their death, and time has not so far abated the vigour of my arm, or tamed the courage of my heart, but I can yet do as much for their son."

"Mean and insolent boast! Meet me on equal terms, and you shall have my consent to try."

"That is not my way. When policy has made what is necessary, easy, I little incline to throw away my triumph. Your consent if I should want your life, will not be needed. But I have not that thought, and thus admonish you solely with a view to your preservation. I would have you well understand, that he who stands before you, and who took a part

Digitized by Google

first in the Irish and then in the English rebellion, is one who will not be trifled with, and who when he threatens dares to execute."

"To what is this prologue to lead?"

"Your patience, Sir. When revolution had bravely done the work of justice, and the head of the son of him who tortured my father, had fallen beneath the axe, I thought the day of comfort at hand. It proved otherwise; soon I found that those who had valued courage while the struggle was undecided, feared, hated, or despised it when the victory had been won. For this I felt discontented, as did others. What followed? Merely for subscribing a petition with divers of the council of agitators, the sword drawn so often in the cause which prevailed, was broken over my head, and I cashiered from the army after enduring the mockery of being compelled

Digitized by Google

to ride with my face towards my horse's tail, at the head of my regiment, with my pretended crime written on my breast."

He stopped as if he looked for some expression of surprise. Albert spoke not, and he went on.

"Disgusted by the insolence and ingratitude which I have described, I wished but for an opportunity of turning against those with whom I had acted so long. Here I concealed my shame from the world, and still solaced myself with the hope that a day of vengeance would arrive. Passing over other events, I hasten to the present period. The follies and outrages which distinguished the protectorates, had brought men generally to wish for a new change. I saw that Charles Stuart would be no unwelcome visitor. To behold those overthrown to whom I had been a firm and useful ally, but who had requited my services with

Digitized by Google

contumely and degradation, I was now content to forget my former hatred to the house of Stuart. The son of James I had seen perish beneath the hands of the executioner, and his grandson I cared not to pursue, but on the contrary was inclined to support with all the means remaining at my command. At this juncture, and not very far from the place you purposed visiting on the night which brought you here, I met Challoner. I hailed him, and knowing his errand to these parts must have some reference to the affairs of Charles, I was well disposed to make him acquainted with what I have now unfolded to you. But he spurned me as though I had been a dog. His tongue reproached, but his eye spoke still more keenly. I threatened, and would have detained him, but you then affecting not to know

Digitized by Google

him, came up, and I was compelled to suffer him to proceed."

This part of Johnson's statement caused Albert a new surprise, while he recalled the almost-forgotten incidents of the evening on which Challoner had visited Lesley.

"How I have since watched, when other eyes were closed in sleep, — what enquiries I have made, and what information I have by these procured, I will not dilate upon at this moment. Suffice it to say I gained such an inkling of what was going on as to be enabled to waylay you. Now learn my motive. Repelled by Challoner when I would fain have become his brother soldier, since I am not admitted to participate in his enterprise, it is my business to defeat it. The means of doing this are securely mine. By ruining him, I shall regain more than all that I have lost; and though

Digitized by Google

the present feeble government cannot stand, a few bold men may yet hang all the royalists in England, and establish a new protector with firmer sway than ever Cromwell could boast. You are now prevented from serving Charles Stuart; will you join the party opposed to him?"

"Never," said Albert; "I have long ceased to recognize in their proceedings that republican virtue for which the turbulent actors in politics claim credit. Your conduct completes my disgust; and I am not disposed to envy you the facility with which you can reconcile yourself to serving adverse masters."

"Politics I consider but as a game, and hold that the rational man will always be found on the winning side the moment it can be determined which that is. The principles of all governments are nearly similar. I care nothing whether I fight for king or protector. To change is a

Digitized by Google

trifle, so the change be rightly made; for where there is success, apostacy will always find sufficient votaries to keep it from being looked out of countenance."

"Enjoy the conviction, but expect not to make a convert of me."

"On you I had other designs. I know my fate if Charles returns to the throne of his father without aid from me. Now, though I am capable of overthrowing all his adherents, were I sure of being well received by them they should have me for an ally. I know the interest Challoner takes in you, and have this to say, if you can change the course of his thoughts respecting me, on my aid the Royalists may calculate; and, to prove beyond all doubt my sincerity, to you will I give for wife my only daughter."

Albert reproached the father of Henrietta with a look which partly told that he understood the value of the offer

Digitized by Google

which had been made. Johnson was unwilling to believe that he had correctly read the thoughts of his prisoner, and strove to persuade himself that doubt of his good faith had caused the resentful return which answered it.

"I speak," said he, "with sincerity. If proof of this be wanting, you may command it."

"It would be a fraud on my part," said Albert, "were I to pretend to any power over Challoner which could reconcile him to you."

"Then, if he is thus perversely obstinate, let him perish for his folly. For you, however, there is salvation yet. Give him up, and give up his politics, and still you shall command the same advantage."

"No, Sir, I am not yet prepared to act the part you would assign to me,

Digitized by Google

even for the honour of becoming the husband of *your daughter.*"

Involuntary sarcasm marked the delivery of the last expressions. It at once touched the wounded pride of Johnson, and called forth transports of rage.

"What!" he exclaimed, "have you learned the story of her shame, or has she sinned anew with you?—But beware. Even such a wife as Henrietta may be preferable to the lot which will be yours, if still insolently proud, you dare to thwart my will."

"My conduct," Albert returned, "will not be regulated by your will. For Henrietta, I have not spoken of her with scorn, though I may have done so much by your proposal and you. This only have I meant to say, that I will neither be the instrument, nor the partner of any new crime which you may

Digitized by Google

meditate. If I must perish, at least it shall be mine to fall with honour."

"It shall be yours to die with disgrace — despised and abhorred even by those for whom you sacrifice yourself. Though by my means your character might again stand fair with Challoner, at this moment he believes you to be the meanest recreant, and the basest ingrate on earth."

"This must be said by one better entitled to credit than you, ere I shall deem it worthy of belief."

"No; in despite even of your folly, incredulity shall give way before my speech. To your confusion know that all the instructions given to you by Challoner were secured by me, ere you had rested more than two hours within these walls."

Digitized by Google

"It is impossible!"

"Believe it so if you can, when I have told you that the letters which were to introduce you to Bentley, at Southgate, have already introduced to him an agent of mine, under your name, as the individual sent by Challoner."

"Monster! it cannot be."

"The cypher of which you were the bearer is mine. Challoner, after being amused by me and by Bentley, who has been led on unwittingly to play my game, is now a prisoner, and doubts not that he has been betrayed by you."

"This must be all a fable. The papers which I carried I took care, as you well know, — to — to destroy."

The well-remembered laugh which played on the countenance of Johnson when Albert gave to the flames what he

Digitized by Google

believed to be the documents now alluded to, again appeared in the face of his tormentor. Albert's voice faltered while he spoke, for he but too well anticipated the nature of the answer which the assertion he ventured would call forth.

"You destroyed papers," said Johnson, "but not those which you brought with you. Those were taken from the envelope, while you, a senseless sot, still reposed in forgetfulness. They were the first things to be secured, but, these taken, further search was to be made, and not to give a premature alarm in the event of your awaking sooner than I expected, others of like bulk were substituted, which I did not afterwards deem it necessary to withdraw."

"O villain, villain! — But still my

Digitized by Google

heart assures me you boast of a triumph which you have not achieved. Had you succeeded to the extent you pretend, why that vain eagerness which you manifested to snatch the papers which I did destroy from the kindling flame?"

"Empty puppet! that was a masterpiece of policy. I found you about to examine the papers. I talked of seizing them to ascertain what importance you attached to them; and when I found you aiming at their destruction, I quietly suffered your purpose to be effected, that if any inconceivable treachery had given the means of communicating with those who had wisely entrusted secrets, on which their very lives depended to you, it should not be in your power to warn them of the dangers which encompassed

Digitized by Google

them. It was my object that what you threw on the fire should be consumed. I only offered to approach, that, facing me, to secure their destruction, you should not know too soon even what you then did."

"Infamous schemer! Even now I doubt. If it were your object to keep me from knowing what was actually done then, why am I told of it now?"

"Because Challoner is in safe custody. Of this I have certain intelligence, and though it is even yet in my power to release and save him, no effort of your's can enable him to escape. Scorned where I would befriend, betrayed where I have been kind, and shunned where I have not offended, such has been my fate through life. Thus hunted like a wild beast, like the savage of the woods,

Digitized by Google

I turn on my pursuers. Since 'every man's hand is against me,' mine 'shall be lifted against every man.' In my case the most comprehensive schemes of bloody vengeance are but the necessary means of self-defence, and just retaliation."

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

LONDON:
Printed by A. & R. Spottiswoode,
New-street-square.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google